

LAKESHORE LINES

Free – and worth every cent!

Discerning Our Future – with Anticipation and Hope

Greetings to all,

The season of Advent marks the beginning of a new liturgical year in the church, and is also traditionally a time of waiting and expectation. In some ways we are often waiting – hoping – for something new to happen, aren't we? "Maybe this time something will change for the better... This election. This person. This circumstance." Advent is the season in the church year where we formalize that expectant waiting that we experience in different ways all year 'round.

This is also the last season of Advent and Christmas to take place during the Interim Ministry at Deer Lake. The themes of Advent and Christmas speak so well to the interim journey as we anticipate, prepare, and wait, for the new thing that God is doing amongst us. Advent is itself a transition time – a liminal moment poised between the "already" present kin-dom of God that we recognize on Reign of Christ Sunday (the Sunday before Advent) and the "not yet" season of Christmas when we remember not only the historical birth of Jesus, but also acknowledge the future realization of God's season: when, as Marcus Borg writes, "God is the ruler of the world and the rulers of this world are not."

We near the end of this transitional time anticipating the future: our own futures, the future of Deer Lake United after the end of the interim ministry in June, the future of The United Church, the collective future of humanity. Hopeful, curious, concerned anticipation.

Let us this one last time together dive into Advent and Christmas: into hope in the face of despair; into love in the face of hate and anger; into peace in the face of violence and war, into joy in the face of mourning or discouragement. Let us enter together into the drama of anticipation and longing for the God who is always already here and always still on the way. Let us do so trusting that, whatever the future holds for us, God is not only with us now, but also already in that future – anticipating *our* arrival. So, together, let us take this journey through Advent and into Christmas and the Epiphany, as they say in the theatre, ... once more, with feeling.

grace and peace,

Vision Statement

Deer Lake United Church welcomes you into a Christian community for all ages that explores and expresses spirituality through:

- worship and music
- fun and fellowship
- caring and outreach
- involvement and growth

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And much more!

IMPORTANT NOTICE!
We missed a very important anniversary in our last issue. Don and Dorothy celebrated 70 years on July 10th. Our apologies, you love birds!



Hope - Love - Joy - Peace

The Season of Advent – the beginning of a new Church year. The circle of life continues as one year ends and another begins. We have much to be grateful for: we live in a relatively safe country, we have warm places to live and call home, food on the table, we have the freedom to choose how we worship and live, and a faith community that supports and hopefully uplifts each of us. As we look back at what has been, what can we learn? Did we open our hearts to hear God calling us? If we heard, did we act? What are the areas we see opportunities for germination, growth and flowering this new year? Where will the possibilities be for us to bring hope, love, joy and peace into our lives, each other's lives, our faith community and the larger world?

The word “advent” is defined as “...the beginning or arrival of something anticipated.” What are you anticipating or waiting for? As we near the end of our interim ministry, we anticipate an ending (saying goodbye to Rev. Scott) *and* a beginning (welcoming our new minister). With the end of the United Church of Canada's old structure, we anticipate a *new* way of being and working together as we join the Pacific Mountain Region. Both these anticipated events bring with them a level of anxiety and uncertainty – I think that's where hope, love, joy and peace come in. After all, what part of our lives couldn't use a little (or a lot!) of each of these every day?

So, as we anticipate and wait through this Advent, I offer to you this prayer/blessing by Teresa of Ávila:

“May today there be peace within.

May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.

May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.

May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you.

May you be content knowing you are a child of God.

Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.

It is there for each and every one of us.”

O Come, O Come Emmanuel.

Blessings and Peace,

Dana (Chair of the Board)

Gogos THANK YOU!!!

By Hannah D (Burnaby Gogos)

Burnaby Gogos send heartfelt thanks to Deer Lake United, for the use of the hall on Sunday, November 25th for the group's sixth annual craft sale. As always, the sale was well-attended and the group was thrilled to be able to send more than \$5,500 profit to the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign, Stephen Lewis Foundation. Our contribution goes directly to community organizations supporting grandmothers raising a generation of children orphaned by AIDS in 15 African countries and helps enable grandmothers there to advocate for their human rights.



The Burning Hut

The only survivor of a shipwreck was washed up on a small, uninhabited island. He prayed feverishly for God to rescue him, and every day he scanned the horizon for help, but none seemed forthcoming.

Exhausted, he eventually managed to build a little hut out of driftwood to protect him from the elements, and to store his few possessions. But then one day, after scavenging for food, he arrived home to find his little hut in flames, the smoke rolling up to the sky. The worst had happened; everything was lost. He was stunned with grief and anger. “God, how could you do this to me?” he cried.

Early the next day, however, he was awakened by the sound of a ship that was approaching the island. It had come to rescue him. “How did you know I was here?” asked the weary man of his rescuers. “We saw your smoke signal,” they replied.

It is easy to get discouraged when things are going bad, but we shouldn't lose heart, because God is at work in our lives, even in the midst of pain and suffering. Remember, next time your little hut is burning to the ground---it just may be a smoke signal that summons the grace of God.

What Do They Do?

By Rev. Scott Swanson

Last Year I wrote a piece on the role of the Trustees in The United Church. At the time I imagined it as the start of a series of articles on the roles of various groups within the church. The Transition Team even identified the topic for the next article. It's taken a bit, but here it is at last: Other than Sunday morning worship, what does the minister do?

Like most things in our culture and the church, the role of the minister (and how they perform that role) has changed in some ways. Different ministers will have slightly different understandings of their roles, so be sure to ask your new minister next year to talk about how they see their function. Different ministers may emphasize different aspects of their work according to their own strengths, preferences, and understanding of ministry. Different position descriptions may emphasize different functions, depending on what a particular congregation is looking for. Recognizing that there has been some confusion or misunderstanding in the past regarding expectations of clergy, the Transition Team is planning an event for January 16 on the role of the minister where we plan to bring together a panel of ministers to talk about their understandings of this question. That's a lot of variation, but there are some basic roles and functions which you can expect from your new minister.

Your minister is *not* one staff member amongst many. In terms of their role and function, ministers are different from other staff in several ways. They are members of the wider church (formerly Presbytery, soon to be Regions), not the congregation. They are ultimately accountable to the wider church (formerly Presbytery and Conference, soon to be Regions). They are responsible for upholding professional ethics and standards of practice as laid out by the denomination. They are in a three-way covenanted relationship with the congregation and the Region. By virtue of their role, they chair the Board of Trustees and are ex-officio members of every committee in the church except Ministry and Personnel. They can even chair Board meetings. They have to be present at Board or Congregational meetings in order for those meetings to make legal decisions. In secular or business terms, the role of minister is similar to that of an executive.

Ministers are responsible for exercising spiritual leadership – a responsibility they share with lay leaders. They are human beings with as many foibles and tendency toward error as anyone else. They don't know everything there is to know about the Bible or theology or church history or human psychology or organizational theory. Most of them are generalists more than specialists. But they accept responsibility by virtue of their calling and position for attending to their own soul- and psychological work, developing their own practices of discipleship, and learning more about how to be better practitioners of ministry in a time of general anxiety in the world and institutional decline in the church.

A lot more could be said; mark January 16 on your calendars for an opportunity to hear more from a panel of ministers on roles and expectations. You can also speak to Scott if you have questions or comments.

Christmas, Gifts and Transition



It's the Christmas season, when we think of gifts – not just the objects that we wrap up and put under the tree. It is a good time to celebrate the personal gifts that we each bring to Deer Lake United Church.

Over the past 18 months, we have all worked hard to discern who we are and what gifts we contribute to this ministry. For example: we know our gifts include pastoral care, hospitality, music, and including children. We have identified a need for new ideas of how to be the church, in the areas of leadership development and spiritual growth. Interim Ministry is a time for listening and learning. It is now time to capture what we have learned into a document called a Ministry Profile and Search Report (MPS). This is the document that asks the Region (formerly Presbytery and Conference) to approve our call to a new minister. It will be made available to ministers who are seeking a change. A Search Team will be appointed by the Board and will include two Transition Team members. The Transition Team expects to circulate a summary of the report to the Board and Congregation early in January.

It is fitting that we begin this journey in the season when we highlight HOPE. We boldly take this next step, hopeful that our strong, committed congregation will find its way to a ministry that is right for our times. We ask God's guidance on our journey.

Thank you for all that you have contributed to our time of Interim Ministry. Your Transition Team sends its wishes for a blessed Christmas Season.

Hope, Peace, Love and Joy

Dave Anderson, Elizabeth Cottam, Garry Forwood, Linda Paddon, Trish Seeram, Leenane Shiels, Scott Swanson and Bruce VanLuven

Hope

Too Many Cooks in the Kitchen? No!

By Kathy R

Larry Juba, Arnie Brown and Bob Chapman, pictured here, are representative of the people who have worked this Fall to redo the kitchen! A couple of others are Rick Milne and Doug Richardson as well as some anonymous families who have donated money to finance the project – and probably others we’ve failed to mention! If so, we’re sorry for the omission.

We are all most grateful for your gifts of time, talent and treasure! The kitchen is used regularly and was in dire need of a freshen-up! Thank you to this resourceful, talented crew! Your gifts are most appreciated!



Harvest for the Homeless

The Outreach Committee would like to offer our sincere thanks to all those who participated in our recent “Harvest for the Homeless.” You filled our cornucopia to overflowing with socks, underwear, gloves, etc. to help the homeless people of Burnaby keep a bit warmer this winter. The Society to End Homelessness in Burnaby will distribute these on December 6, when they celebrate “Outreach Christmas” and provide a special Christmas meal to Burnaby Homeless.

Thanks to the generosity of the people of Deer Lake United Church, we also recently sent \$1000 to the Society to End Homelessness in Burnaby. Half of this money will go towards an event called “Outreach Christmas,” which provides a Christmas dinner with all the trimmings. The other \$500 will go to the Society’s Outreach Centre to purchase ongoing needed items such as deodorant, toe warmers and underwear.

Christmas Families

In this Christmas season, Deer Lake United Church continues its tradition of sponsoring some at-risk Burnaby families. In the past, we did this through the Burnaby Christmas Bureau, but this year we worked with Edmonds Community School and Dixon House, two organizations that Deer Lake has supported in various ways throughout the years. They matched us with families who are in need but who may not qualify for support from elsewhere.

In total, we sponsored three families in need - all single-parent families, with a total of 10 children ranging in age from 7 to 17 - providing gifts for each family member, as well as groceries for the family.

The Outreach Committee is very grateful to all those who have given so generously to support this ministry, whether through their offering or by contributing to the “Lunch on the Run,” which was held in late October. Equal thanks also go to those who have purchased items for these families.



Unwanted Guests

By Kathryn Small

While all people are welcome at DLUC, there are some visitors that are not welcome – specifically Rats and Mice!

There has been a continuing problem with these rodents, and it often gets worse at this time of year when they are looking for a place out of the cold.

Work on blocking up holes has been ongoing to try to prevent them from entering the building and from making their way within the building through various holes in the walls that lead to convenient pathways throughout the church via the wall voids.

Leaving an exterior door open for even a short period of time is an open invitation for rodents to enter.

So, please, securely close any exterior door as soon as you have walked through it!

In addition, it helps if no food is left lying around for these rodents. Even crumbs provide a tasty meal for them. ***Store foods in containers rodents cannot get into.*** Please note that they can easily chew their way through film/soft plastic, paper, paperboard, cardboard, and even some types of rigid plastic.

Let's all do what we can to encourage visitors of the rodent kind to stay outdoors where they belong.



Hospitality in Surrey

I was checking into my hotel in Surrey this evening and I asked the man at the desk if he knew if there was a restaurant in the hotel. He told me that there wasn't but there were a lot of restaurants up on 152nd. I made a face and said I didn't really feel like getting into my truck and heading out to look for a place to eat but I guess I'd have to. We finished up with the check-in procedure and when he gave me my key card he said that his wife was bringing him some food for dinner and he could tell her to bring some extra if I wanted to join them. I was taken off guard completely. When was the last time a hotel worker offered to feed you? I felt awkward and stammered a bit and said that I didn't want to impose. He assured me that there would be plenty of food and I should meet him at the breakfast room at about 6:30 when his dinner break started.

I went to my room and got settled and then I headed down to the breakfast room for dinner. I walked in and the first thing that hit me was the delicious smell. Mohammed introduced me to his wife Aseel and we all sat down to eat. OH MY GOD! Falafel, kebabs, fattoush, shawarma and other amazing foods. I was treated and fed like a King.

We chatted for a long time and they explained to me that they fled Syria and came to Canada with the other 60,000 refugees last year. [ED's note: The actual number of government-sponsored Syrian refugees was 26,000. Another 14,000 were privately sponsored, totaling 40,000.] They spoke very little about how bad things were in Syria but they couldn't wait to tell me how happy they were to be living and working in Canada. Mohammed is a pharmacist and upgrading at University and Aseel is a lawyer who has to pass the bar in Canada before she can work as a lawyer. They were so enthusiastic to be here that I couldn't help but share their enthusiasm as we spoke. At the end of the meal Aseel wrapped some food in tinfoil for my lunch tomorrow and Mohammed said one last thing to me. "Don't take your country for granted." I of course got a lump in my throat and gave them a hug and thanked them profusely.

While I was walking up to my room it occurred to me that a Syrian refugee family came all the way to Canada and fed ME! I got off the elevator and walked a little further and corrected myself. A CANADIAN family fed me.

This article was written by Dave Gaskill. It was published and shared on Facebook

Presbytery Memorial Service

By Dana J

The last meeting of Westminster Presbytery (ever) was Tuesday December 4th at Eagle Ridge United Church. In keeping with the theme of a Jazz Funeral/Memorial Service, members were encouraged to wear clothing appropriate for a funeral that might be a party. Our own Rev. Scott was seen in a dandy tux; Unfortunately Deer Lake's Rep, Dana, totally forgot and arrived in a red sweater and black jeans...at least in keeping with the season (she had Christmas tree earrings on too!). Dinner was followed by the funeral service, which started with members writing something they were thankful for (about Presbytery) and an invitation to put that in the "coffin". Next, the Eulogy was given by Rev. Dave Anderson (very witty), and the Last Will and Testament of the Westminster Presbytery was read by Rev. Shannon Tennant. Candles were lit, great music was provided on the piano and voices were raised with a jazzy beat. Gifts were handed out, members were recognized, and many thanks given for endless volunteer hours and commitment. Much reminiscing and sharing of memories happened throughout the evening, which ended with a rousing speech from Rev. Jay Olson, President of B.C. Conference, that acknowledged we are heading into the unknown, there will be rough patches and lessons to learn, but the underlying message was one of hope and excitement as we say goodbye to what we have known, and hello to what is yet to unfold. Exciting and scary times are ahead of us – we look to our strength, our God, for the grace and wisdom needed for new growth, new life, to follow where God leads us. As Rev. Jay said, "Can I hear an Amen?" AMEN (let it be so!)

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!
Deer Lake United Church is now a part of the
newly-formed Pacific Mountain Region



Picking on the Prof at the Men's Advent Breakfast



Heard Around the Church

A mother took her three-year-old daughter to church for the first time. The church lights were lowered, and then the choir came down the aisle carrying lighted candles. All was quiet until the little one started to sing in a loud voice, "Happy birthday to you, Happy birthday to you..."

Nine-year-old Joey was asked by his mother what he had learned in Sunday School. "Well, Mom, our teacher told us how God sent Moses behind enemy lines on a rescue mission to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. When he got to the Red Sea, he had his engineers build a pontoon bridge, and all the people walked across safely. He used his walkie-talkie to radio headquarters and call in an air strike. They sent in bombers to blow up the bridge and all the Israelites were saved." "Now Joey, is that REALLY what your teacher taught you?" his mother asked. "Well, no, Mom, but if I told it the way the teacher did, you'd never believe it!"

A child came home from Sunday School and told his mother that he had learned a new song about a cross-eyed bear named Gladly. It took his mother a while before she realized that the hymn was really "Gladly the Cross I'd Bear".

It was that time during the Sunday morning service for "the children's sermon", and all the children were invited to come forward. One little girl was wearing a particularly pretty dress and, as she sat down, the pastor leaned over and said to her, "That is a very pretty dress. Is it your Easter dress?" The little girl replied, directly into the pastor's clip-on microphone, "Yes, and my Mom says it's a bitch to iron."

Finding one of her students making faces at others on the playground, Ms. Smith stopped to gently reprove the child. Smiling sweetly, the Sunday School teacher said, "Bobby, when I was a child, I was told that if I made ugly faces, my face would freeze and I would stay like that." Bobby looked up and replied, "Well, Ms. Smith, you can't say you weren't warned."



Upcoming Events At and Around Deer Lake United Church

Children's Christmas Pageant
Sunday December 23 @ 10:30 am

Christmas Eve Family Service
Monday December 24 @ 4:00 pm

Christmas Eve Late Service
Monday December 24 @ 7:00 pm

Submissions

Lakeshore Lines is published four times each year. Submissions may be made to one of the Communications Committee members (preferably by email):

newsletter@dluc.ca

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