

# Reaching Out

## A ministry of St. Aidan's United Church

Our Core Values: Hospitality, Spiritual Growth and Reaching Out  
Our Mission: Life-changing ministry with all through Jesus Christ  
We are an Affirming Church

December 2012



## O Come All Ye Faithful!

Christmas and tradition seem to go together.

Perhaps it is our traditions which make this time of year feel so comforting. Parts of the tradition are the many rituals which add up to making our Christmases. There are open-houses, baking, tree trimming, visits to be made, gift shopping, food and parties, repeated year after year.

This year, I invite you to consider where Jesus fits in as a part of your Christmas tradition. What does the story of Jesus, born of a virgin in a manger in the Jewish town of Bethlehem mean to your own modern day faith and spirituality? How does the story of God becoming incarnate move us closer to our Creator? Traditions can provide a firm grounding for new understandings and insights into our faith.

At St. Aidan's our Christmas planning has centred on the traditional Christmas story. On December 16, the youth and children will present their annual pageant, reminding us again of the familiar story. That night, the St. Aidan's choirs will be presenting Christmas music. The following Sunday, December 23, the Ted Boulden choir will lead us in singing traditional carols. On Christmas Eve, at 7 pm, a brass quartet will be a part of the traditional lessons and carols service and on Christmas Day, there will be a communion service and potluck lunch.

May Christmas 2012 be a time for all of us to explore new spiritual paths on our traditional journey to Bethlehem. Michael Caveney



## Our Love of Music

Mark your calendars: December 16, 7pm

## Carols by Candlelight



All St. Aidan's Choirs invite you to an evening of traditional and contemporary Christmas music: the classics you love to hum along with, and new ones destined to become favourites!

### *Do you love to sing too?*

There is still time to be a participant for this and other Christmas music. All choirs will welcome new singers. Thursday practices: Mirabile 3:45-5:00, Jubilate 5:00-6:30, Ted Boulden Singers 6:30-8:00, Kids Choir Sundays after worship.

### *Did you know?*

St. Aidan's has a very extensive music library of about 500 anthems. Through the summer, we went through the music, culling anthems we will no longer use and we sent lists to local churches offering "music to a good home, without charge" and a number of pieces were taken. Music now lives with St Andrews Presbyterian, Shady Creek United, Emmanuel Baptist, Fairfield United, St Stephen's in Qualicum, Community Church on Pender Island and a church in Charlottetown, PEI. We are so thankful that this music has gone to good homes.



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Another year of "Bazaar" fellowship, fun and fundraising has past!

As I meandered through the maze of jellies, jams, aprons, scarves and linens, plants, pictures, books and toys, I was amazed by the palpable energy and excitement! St. Aidan's folk along with their neighbors, relatives and friends were selling, buying, bidding...and connecting with each other. It is the essence of God's call into right relationship! Many old and new stories were shared, and many new friendships created!

Accolades to all who work on this awesome event year after year; coordinating (facilitators and helpers), creating (knitting and sewing), cleaning (toys, Thrift Shop items), checking (jewelry), cooking (jams, jellies, & baking too!), crafting (pamphlets and directional signage)...and many more that I am sure I have forgotten to mention!

A time of rest is well-deserved! And as we "rest up" for our next Bazaar, let us continue to share these stories-the stories that tell of our connection to each other and the world, the stories that make hard work fun, the stories that give us means to continue our work in the church and the world!

Betty Anne Dempsey



### Hospitality Team

Hospitality is one of St. Aidan's Core Values. It infuses our relationship with one another and is of paramount importance in making others feel welcome among us. For Sunday services we organize this through Team Leaders who, for one month a year, find greeters for each service and generally make sure our welcome is real.

Some of our Team Leaders have had to step down so new Team Leaders are urgently needed. If you are able to contribute in this way please contact Gwen Armstrong at 250-370-2114 or email [gwenarmstrong33@gmail.com](mailto:gwenarmstrong33@gmail.com) or Kay Oldfield. These contact people help the Team Leaders with necessary support, especially in getting started.



### Christian Meditation

Meditation is a Christian practice going back to the 4th century. Sit quietly, listen to music, hear a short taped talk, and then enter 20 - 25 minutes of contemplative silence, repeating to oneself, a word or words. Come and join us, and be connected to the world wide community for Christian meditation. See you there.  
Moir. 250-477-7689.

# December at St. Aidan's

## Advent Communion

Sunday, December 2, 10am

To mark the beginning of Advent, our Sunday morning worship service will include communion.

## Communion Tea

Thursday, December 6, 2pm

An informal service of communion for those seniors who may have difficulty attending church on a regular basis. Tea will be served. Rides can be provided.

## Women's Advent Lunch

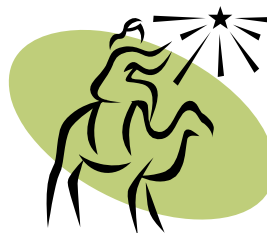
Friday, December 7, 12noon

Our annual gathering includes a chance to browse through Bazaar stalls such as Knitting, Sewing and Jewellery, plus enjoy a potluck lunch with lots of pleasant women.

## White Gifts Sunday & 'Angel Gifts' for Our Place Inner City Ministry

Sunday, December 9, 10am

This annual initiative, "Angel Gifts" is part of our outreach to the Our Place ministry. Gift cards will be available from December 2, and wrapped, labelled gifts need to be returned to the church no later than December 16.



## Christmas Pageant iLive!

Sunday, December 16, 10am

The Christmas story according to the Romans! So what really happened?? Come and find out! An energetic re-telling of the story, with kids and props. [See rehearsal schedule in box below]



## Carols by Candlelight

Sunday, December 16, 7pm

Our popular Christmas season event - joyful music with all St. Aidan's Choirs - a time of singing, listening and sharing.



## Carol Sing

Sunday, December 23, 10am

The favourites we get to listen to and sing just once a year. Join us and hum along! Hosted by the Ted Boulden Singers.

## Community Christmas Eve Service

Monday, December 24, 7pm

Everyone is welcome to an evening of carols and readings to mark this important event in the Christian year, featuring choir and brass quartet.

## Christmas Communion & Lunch Tuesday, December 25

We'll begin with a joyful communion service at 10am, then gather in the Lower Hall for a potluck lunch. Come and share the celebration with other pleasant folk!



### Pageant Rehearsal Schedule

Sunday, Dec. 2, 10am

*Parts divided up, run-through*

Sunday, Dec. 9, 10am

*Run-through and snack*

Sunday, Dec. 16, 9:30am

*Meet in Great Hall for costumes*

## Pastoral Care/Membership

Our PC/M Team meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 9:30 am, and we invite you to join us if you share our interest in this mission of personal outreach and caring. Remember - this is a Team with a big heart!

In December, we will host a special Advent Communion Tea for several people who simply cannot attend church on a regular basis - it's a wonderful afternoon with some delightful individuals.

With the help of so many of you, we continue to provide support (and occasionally meals) for families dealing with special needs and health crises.

We offer therapeutic interventions based on techniques of Healing Pathway - an amazing experience of intentional practices that promote relaxation and facilitate your body's participation in it's own healing.

We help coordinate a prayer group in response to special individual and family needs.

We strive to facilitate supportive connections within our church family that promote acceptance, caring, and self-esteem.

*As we approach the season of Advent,  
we extend to EACH of you, our wishes for  
Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.*

***May it be so!***

Please contact any PC/M Team member for more information: Val Bauld, Puddie Curtis, Betty Anne Dempsey, Diane Kendall, Susan Kurushima, Jean Margison, Helen Pinel, Phyllis McNaughton, Carol Sidhu, Moira Wightman

## Monday Morning Bible Study

You are invited to join our study group of about 12 people as we look at the scriptures for the upcoming Sunday. We meet at 10:30 every Monday morning. No bible knowledge necessary. Come and listen or share your thoughts and opinions. A study sheet is prepared and is emailed out a few days in advance. If you would like to receive one, email [michael@staidansunited.com](mailto:michael@staidansunited.com)



Next Newsletter Deadline:  
January 16, 2013



## Social Action Team

The two social action foci for our congregation this year are Haiti and Mental Health. On November 6, the team hosted a pizza dinner with presentations from Gian Polastri on water projects in Haiti, and Mike Emme

with representatives of the Pandora Arts Collective, an initiative in Fernwood for those with mental challenges. It is artwork from members of this collective that was on display in the sanctuary during the month of October.

In addition to these projects, the social action team continues its work in the local community through liaison with the Mt. Tolmie Community Association, the Mt. Tolmie Discussion Group on Poverty and the Mt. Tolmie Community Table.

The team is kept up to date on various groups in the wider community through team member participation in Kairos, an ecumenical social justice organization, and OikoCredit which arranges micro credit.

If you are interested in joining the social action team, we would love to have you come to one of our meetings on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm to check us out!



## Women's Circle Tuesdays 1:30pm

This gathering for women of all ages and interests will continue to meet on Tuesdays at 1:30 pm until December 11 and will resume in the new year on Tuesday, January 8, 2013.

### *Did you know?*

***St. Aidan's people continue to support Our Place with service, clothing and other goods, participation in fundraising events, and special financial support. Our Place does not ask, "who is worthy?"; it just sees an opportunity to help other human beings in a time of need. The far-reaching benefits of this enterprise to the individuals and the community cannot be measured.***

## ORC News

Just in case you have forgotten, the ORC or "Operational Review Committee" is an ad hoc committee established by Council to assess the Vitality and Viability of St. Aidan's. We have been working hard since June, meeting with many of you to learn how you feel about our church. We have heard of the many positive aspects of St. Aidan's as well as things we might improve on. In addition, we have spent a lot of time reviewing attendance and financial reports including local and national trends.

Our Draft Report is now ready for a review and discussion by the Church Council planned for early in December. Our Committee is most grateful to all the members of the Congregation, Ministry and Staff who have spoken with us. We feel that we have managed to create a comprehensive document with clear recommendations that will be able to guide Council in their decision making and help make our church even stronger.

Some of these recommendations such as a Newsletter, Stewardship/Pledge Drive and improvements to our website are already taking place. We are optimistic that Council will decide to act on many of the others presented in our Report.

Roger Hannaford (Chair), Kristine Allison,  
Colin Booth, Sylvia Campbell, Brian Habbick,  
Janis Evans.

## Notes from the Stewardship Team –



### "Your Money Counts"

On November 18, letters with pledge cards and a Christmas offering envelope were distributed to all households in the congregation. The anonymous pledge cards will help the finance committee determine the income from the congregation for 2013 in the preparation of the budget to be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting on February 24.

We are hoping that you will put St. Aidan's on your Christmas gift-giving list and use the Christmas offering envelope at the Christmas Eve service or any Sunday during December. We thank you for your prayerful consideration of this gift.

On Sunday January 20, Brenda Watt will be leading us in worship. Brenda is a well-known stewardship specialist in the United Church and was one of the speakers at the Vancouver stewardship conference which members of the team attended in October. Brenda's lively approach to stewardship is a new and different take on the subject! The next afternoon, Jane Harding, Financial Development Officer for BC Conference, will be speaking with St. Aidan's folks on stewardship at an afternoon tea.

## Building Rentals

Can you feel the buzz in the air? Christmas concerts are coming up.- it's our most "event"-ful time of the year (other than the Bazaar).and the Sanctuary will be very, very busy. Concerts begin on November 25 and go right through to December 22. If you'd like to be a part of the audience, contact me to find out the particulars. Our Sanctuary is well known for its "great acoustics" and is "first choice" for our musical guests. The Sanctuary is available for concerts, recitals, and recordings all through the year, not just at Christmas and Spring. Keep us in mind if you are looking for the perfect spot for yours, or if you know of someone who is searching.

**Who do you go to?** If you have any questions, meeting or space requests, borrowing needs, or simply want to know the who's, when's, and what for's, come and see me first! I work Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 8:00 am - 12:00 noon. Keep Smilin' ! Jane



## Christmas Tea Fundraiser

You are invited for tea the afternoon of Sunday, December 9, with Barbara Hansen, Diaconal Ministry Candidate. This is an intimate opportunity for conversation and for indulging in special Scandinavian Christmas treats surrounded by internationally collected decorations. Two sittings: 1pm and 3pm. Tickets \$20 (proceeds towards the cost of her studies). Deadline for purchase: Friday, December 7. Contact June Coutts 250-472-7233 [jrcoutts@shaw.ca](mailto:jrcoutts@shaw.ca) or Maryl McCay 250-477-8526 [marylmccay@shaw.ca](mailto:marylmccay@shaw.ca). (We might even deliver the tickets!) Presbytery Circle of Accompaniment (in support of Barbara's studies)



I have a friend who goes to church in Cadboro Bay.  
He called me over for he had something important to say,  
"Can you get me the recipe for a cookie I ate?  
Monday, October 15<sup>th</sup> is the significant date."  
That was the night we heard Michael Dowd speak.  
Many cookies were made for the audience to eat.  
If you are the one who made COCONUT cookies so yummy,  
Please send me the recipe - can't promise you money!  
Who would have thought that a talk about faith + evolution  
Would produce this poem to help find the solution  
For a very dear friend who has a sweet tooth.  
Who dares to say that the United Church  
is afraid of the Truth! - Val Bauld



## Our Youth Group in Action!

On Saturday, November 24, we gathered in the sanctuary to view a wonderful movie focusing on First Nations people and their story. Pamela Bourque led us in creating beautiful felted figures which will be used as a Nativity for the Christmas season. It was a fun, heart-warming evening.



## Making Good Use of the Library

There are several resources to enable you to make better use of our Library. One of these is Booklists. They are created periodically in response to different occasions, and they give you a glimpse of some of the holdings on a particular subject. Booklist topics include Science and Religion, Death and Grief, Large Print, etc.

The library website is another resource and can be found at [library.staidansunited.com](http://library.staidansunited.com). Here you can look up any title, author, subject, etc. you want, and can check to see what material we have.

Experiment, ask for help (send an email if you can't nab one of us), place holds, and have fun. You can't make any changes to our data, so play around to your heart's content. And if you'd like to help us in the library, we'd be delighted to talk further.

Louise Booth

**[More specific information about searching for material can be found on St. Aidan's website]**

***Mission & Service : Time to brag! Did you know that as far as givings to M & S are concerned, St. A's stands first in Victoria Presbytery, second on Vancouver Island and sixth in all of BC?!!***

Newsletter Editors: Sylvia Campbell, Janis Evans.  
Formatting: Judy Langford

