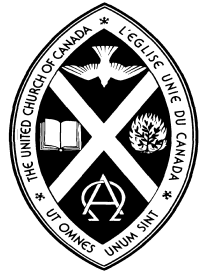




The Grapevine



The Newsletter of Shaughnessy Heights United Church

Vol 3: Issue 3: November 2002

You can make a difference!

A Personal Appeal from The Treasurer

“Annual expenditure - \$100, annual income - \$105, result – happiness; annual expenditure - \$100, annual income - \$95, result – misery!” Mr. Micawber said (more or less) in David Copperfield.

It's no different at SHUC. Please act now and give generously to help us avoid a deficit for 2002.



Special Offering

At the February congregational meeting, we approved a balanced budget for 2002. To meet the budget we all covenant to provide some of our scarce financial resources as offering income to the church.

The leaders of the congregation, committee chairs and staff covenant to exercise prudent stewardship over these resources that are entrusted to their care.

To the end of October, our offerings have fallen short of our commitments by about \$16,000 or nearly 7%. Our expenses are in line with the reduced expense budget that Council adopted at its October meeting. The reduced expense budget was over 7% lower than the original budget approved in February.

The latest projections are forecasting a deficit of about \$10,000 for the year. But so much depends on our offerings in December. In recent years we have received about 17.5% of our total year's offerings in this one month!

Enclosed with this issue of THE GRAPEVINE you will find a statement of your contributions to the end of October. If you have fallen behind your plan for the full year (and many of us have), please try to catch up before year end. Remember that we can give 2002 tax receipts only for money received by December 31.

And maybe you could consider giving a little more to help avoid a deficit. If each of our households could give an extra \$50, we could avoid a deficit. Some of us are blessed with greater financial resources than others. Could we consider an extra \$100 or even \$200? Together, we can all make a difference!

John Christie, SHUC Treasurer

Worship – Time and Eternity

“What is worship?” was the question the newly reconstituted Worship Team asked itself as we gathered for our second meeting recently.

Encounter with God through singing, silence, reading scripture, speaking, praying – all these activities were included among our responses. We remembered that *leitourgia* is the Greek word for the English “liturgy,” a synonym for worship. But we also reminded ourselves that *leitourgia* is the “work of the people.”

Our discussion ranged over different types of worship: the informal and intimate Wednesday evening service, the monthly Taize-style worship led by Roslyn Richardson, praise services in more conservative Christian traditions, worship that tends toward being more entertainment than evocative, and the Sunday morning service in our sanctuary – worship that combines dignity with freedom and variety....

Our conversation soon went to the length of worship. Is 60 minutes sacred? What about the Orthodox whose worship is three-hours? Often Roman Catholic masses are just 45 minutes. Can worshippers who find the pews hard or whose bladder capacity is limited walk to the foyer area for relief (there are washrooms at the sanctuary entrance and space to walk to keep muscles from sleeping.)

We noted that services routinely are now 75 minutes – in part to ensure the Church School has an adequate teaching time with the children; in part because there is so much to do and say, and so many to involve in a service of worship. When we go over 75 minutes we all get a bit uncomfortable and make efforts to curtail announcements or shorten the children's time or take out an introit or shorten the hymns or trim the sermon....

The reality is that worship is a complicated balancing act trying to meet various needs, concerns and expectations. The main hope is that through worship we encounter God and find strength and wisdom for the journey of faithful living.

If you have thoughts about worship, contact: Pat Carpenter, MaryLou Harrigan, Nancy Templeton, Irene Dungate, Dorothy Cummings, Philip Francis with your thoughts or speak to Cathy Pedersen and Harry Oussoren, who work as staff with the Team.*HO*



Advent

“HERE AM I, THE SERVANT OF THE LORD; LET IT BE WITH ME ACCORDING TO YOUR WORD” - Luke 1:38

From the Chair

Noralyn Smiley writes: It has been a busy fall. In addition to all of the staff, who are always active in helping us to reach out and reach inward, many folks have been active in a variety of ways to enable our congregation to keep growing in number and in spirit.

Margot Arbogast and Linda Hodgson, along with countless others, helped us to open our doors to the community. Several people have hosted cottage meetings to help us get to know Ross, and each other. David Ansley and Jennifer Aram are giving serious thought to the role and function of the Outreach Committee, and are helping us to broaden our thoughts about our possibilities and responsibilities in that area. After two years of faithful service Paul Saxon has resigned as Nominations Chairperson. We thank him for his work, and trust that he will continue advise us as we seek to develop a model which endeavours not only to fill vacancies but also to develop leadership within the congregation.

Pat Carpenter has given leadership in developing a Worship Team which seeks to examine issues such as, What is worship? How do we make best use of the sanctuary? Which features about the space contribute to worship and which ones don't? How do we involve children in worship? How do we provide diversity? How do the arts and music best contribute to worship?

Charlotte Burns has developed some new seniors' programs. Allan Cunningham has taken on the job of revitalizing the Operations (formerly Administration and Property) Committee. This committee now has several subgroups: Technical and Equipment (including computers and sound system), Facilities (rentals), Property (maintenance and upkeep), and Grounds (including the Memorial Garden). Yvonne Choi has brought together people of varied backgrounds and is helping to welcome them to SHUC and to the community. We are working hard with our Day Care colleagues to establish better communication, and new understandings of our working relationship.

The list could go on and on. We have an excellent working group in our church Council and each member is doing his or her part to enable SHUC to be a welcoming, nurturing, and responsible community. The Council Planning Group, Helen Cheung, Philip Francis, Harry Oussoren and Noralyn Smiley, tries valiantly to keep track of all of the many facets of our life as a community of faith. We meet monthly, and more often if necessary. If you have concerns or joys to report, please speak with one of us.

We look forward to the many joys and activities which await us in the Advent Season.

Noralyn Smiley
SHUC Council Chairperson

Gifts for Christmas

How can we show our gratitude to God for the gift of love in Christ at Christmas? The White Gift Sunday (December 8th) musical story of the King's Quilt will help us learn. It will remind us that abundant life comes from giving, not from hoarding. So we rejoice in the privilege and opportunity of "white gift" sharing in Christ's name. (White Gifts come from the practice of wrapping lavish and modest gifts in white wrapping to ensure that all gifts gathered are treasured equally.)

Here are various ways you can share God's generosity and care in this holy season:

Personal Products Project –

For all ages, all groups, all families – the entire SHUC household.

Through First United Church and the WISH Centre, we share with men and women in need.

Bring your contributions in white plastic bags to the bins in the church foyer and office area, starting immediately and culminating on White Gift Sunday, December 8th:

For Women and Men:

hand-soap, shampoo, shaving cream, deodorant, toothpaste, tooth brushes, combs, mirrors, nail clippers, razors, new underwear, socks, etc. Women's hygienic products also welcome. (several small packages work better for users than single large containers)

Non-Perishable Food – to replenish the First United Church food pantry, which responds to emergency need. Bring your food items in white plastic bags on communion Sunday, December 1st or on Sunday, December 8th or during the week. Tinned vegetables and fruit, peanut butter, jams, cereals, hot chocolate mixes, tea bags – you name it! Everyone can participate and be a blessing.

Personal Gifts for children at Kate Booth Transition House – toys and other gifts wrapped and labelled can be placed under the Christmas tree in the office foyer or at worship on December 1st. The children's part is on December 5, so all gifts must be gathered by December 2nd. Label each gift: age and sex of child, describe the gift. Contact: Ann Thorsteinsson, 604 733-3782

Money Gifts

- **White Gift Sunday Offering** – an envelope is provided with this edition of the Grapevine. Since no food hamper program is planned, this is an effective way to help people in need. Money can be directed to either or both of the following:
 - the **Mission and Service Fund** of the United Church supporting various ministries and projects in Canada and around the world, including downtown ministries in major cities across Canada; cooperative craft programs in developing countries; emergency relief when disasters strike; etc.
 - the **Caring & Sharing Fund** which responds to human need within and around the congregation and through First United Church to Downtown Eastsiders (50-50 split)
- **Special Christmas Donations for the SHUC Mission** – envelopes will be sent with the December 8th edition of the Grapevine. The envelopes provide opportunity to give "over and above" to ensure that the various programs and witness of the congregation are supported and financed. Your generosity can help ensure that no deficit in 2002 will undermine the mission in 2003.

We have been blessed and have the gifts to bless others.

Advent Leads to Christmas

“The Strangeness of God”

Advent – the four Sundays before Christmas – is a time for preparation and reflection. In this dormant season of the year, we wait patiently for the coming Christ. Literally “advent” means “coming.”

This year’s Advent theme is “the strangeness of God.” When we think about God, we are overwhelmed by One who is larger than the cosmos and yet more intimate to us than our own heartbeat. Not aloof and disinterested, this God keeps being involved in the processes of life: creating, redeeming, and inspiring.

Christmas is the ‘unbelievable’ story of faith, that in the holy infant born in a rude stable in Bethlehem God is revealed, enfleshed, humanized! The divine-human contradiction is transcended. The scriptures of the Advent season point up the strangeness of God.

The theme starts on the first Sunday – December 1st, when the text from Isaiah 64:1-9 speaks to us about God’s awesome deeds we did not expect.

On the second Advent – White Gift – Sunday, the word from Isaiah (40:1-11) is “comfort, comfort my people” - the forgiving God keeps reaching out to unfaithful people. The day will include the “King’s Quilt” musical, which reveals God’s “upside down” values: joy in life is a gift which comes as we give ourselves with love to the other.

On the third Sunday, we hear stories of God choosing surprising people to be the bearers of God’s grace. A prophet speaks liberation to a captive people. A teenage girl becomes the mother of the Christ-child.

December 22nd is the Sunday for the children’s nativity tableau, revealing the ultimate strangeness of God in choosing to be revealed in the infant Jesus – poor and homeless. A complete surprise! “The revelation of the mystery kept secret for long ages, now disclosed.” (Romans 16:25-27)

On each of the four Sundays, the red, white, yellow, black banners, introduced last year, will mark our journey to Bethlehem. The banners created last year by Ann Thorsteinsson and Gwen Horne, acknowledge the four “corners” of the earth and the wonderful diversity of

God’s people gathering to marvel at God’s Christmas miracle.

How can you participate in this Advent “Strangeness of God?”

- Join in worship: Sundays starting at 9:50 a.m. with pre-service carol singing, followed by worship at 10 a.m.
- Participate in Wednesday evening worship at 7 p.m. and the Bible Conversations focusing on the “strangeness of God” on Wed., December 3, 10, 17 after worship (see announcement p.12).
- Be part of the “Hanging of the Greens” event – decorating, worshipping, and sharing international foods on Nov. 30 (see separate announcement on p.12)
- Observe the four weeks of Advent in your home – a resource will be available at the “hanging of the greens” event
- Reflect on the “strangeness of God” and how God acts surprisingly in your life
- Pray for people to be “strangely warmed” by the forgiving love of God
- Make real the “strangeness of God” by being generous – participate fully in the Christmas giving program outlined on p.2 and the newcomer hospitality program (p.4).
- Simplify the pre-Christmas period - keep gifts simple. Direct money toward those in need. Buy durable gifts; create your own gifts; surprise people with random gifts of kindness; focus on the people not on the things. Keep time for personal reflection.

• If you are grieving loss, be part of the two grieving services: 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 1st and 22nd. This is time to acknowledge your loss and to hear God’s Word of comfort and consolation.

• Participate in the Christmas Eve Services: 4:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.

• Take part in the Westside Christmas Day Service at West Point Grey United Church, 10:30 a.m. (4595 8th Avenue West, just east of Blanca).

May the Advent theme hymn “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” be a prayer answered in love.

Harry Oussoren
Lead Minister



Harry Oussoren - “May the Advent theme hymn “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” be a prayer answered in love.”

Staff Team Building

Every Tuesday morning the SHUC staff gathers for its weekly meeting. It’s a time to check in, to pray, and to work together on agenda that stretches from Sunday debriefing to summer planning. In early October, the normally 90 minute staff meeting was extended to five hours. In a workshop on staff relations, Louise Griffiths helped staffers to appreciate differences and discover ways to make the differences work constructively. With a staff of ten – Nina, Harold, Ros, Ross, Roy, Cathy, Cathy, Yvonne, Janet; plus wedding and memorial coordinators Gwen & Lucille and Phyllis – keeping the lines of communication open and creative is a high priority.



Wednesday Worship

Every Wednesday, 7 p.m. in the Chapel
An oasis of quiet, prayer, scripture, and communion.

You are invited and welcome.

Comfort, Comfort My People - Grief Services

Sunday, December 1st and 22nd at
2:00 p.m.

The Advent-Christmas season can be a poignant time for those who are grieving. The death of a loved one, a broken relationship, a vision shattered – these and other losses evoke grief within us. To speak to our loss, two special “grieving” services are planned. In previous years, those who attended the grief service felt strengthened and encouraged to participate more freely in the festive season. All are welcome. Please use these opportunities to invite friends and neighbours to experience God’s comfort, support and healing.

The first service will be on Sunday, December 1st in the Chapel. The second service will take place on Sunday, December 22nd – a communion service in the Sanctuary. Both services begin at 2 p.m. and will be followed by a reception hosted by members of the Pastoral Care Team.

The following poem speaks to those who remain when a loved one has died:

This year when Christmas boughs are draped
And cards around the doorway taped
And cookies baked, and green wreaths hung
And carols in the crisp night sung
This Christmas cannot be as fair
In homes where there’s an empty chair.

Dear God in heaven, bless with peace
Those whose Christmas joy has ceased
For those who grieve and cannot bear
The stillness of that empty chair.

Instill in them a second sight
To see in death a lasting light
Which reassures that those who’ve died
Now kneel before the manger side
To celebrate the blessed birth
More grandly than we can on earth.

And may those visions of your care
Bring hope enough to fill that chair
So Christmas carols may be sung
And Christmas bells may still be rung
And Christmas peace replace all fears
And Christmas joy be felt through tears.

(Author unknown)

SHUC Town Hall Meeting – to vision and plan.

Saturday, January 25th from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Will you be there?



Labyrinth

The floor is sanded, the lines are painted and when the coats of varnish protect the surface, the gym will be ready for basketball, volleyball, and labyrinth.

Labyrinth is not a sport. It is a means for prayer. Starting on the outside of the labyrinth, the praying person enters the labyrinth and prayerfully follows its winding paths to the centre. In the quiet, spiritual centre there is opportunity for rest, prayer, and preparation for the journey back to the world.

The labyrinth will be available whenever the gym is not booked for other uses. Leaflet and other resources on how to use the labyrinth will be available outside the gym door.

The labyrinth is for all ages. Children and youth will benefit from the experience of “centering.” Adults will find the labyrinth a helpful tool to cultivate a more prayerful way of being.

Special thanks to Len Sawyer, Harold Kruk, Norm Roaf and friends for their work in making the labyrinth a reality!

Bridge Builder Programs – Hosting Newcomers

Are you willing to share part of your Christmas festivities with a newcomer to Canada. Most immigrants have left their family and extended circle of friends behind in their home country. Here in Canada, cultivating new friendships and networks is a challenge.

The Christmas season is particularly hard on newcomers. When Glenys and I lived in Geneva for two years, we were so grateful for new neighbours willing to invite us in for the Christmas meal or for a dessert and coffee time, or even for an overnight visit. It helped us with our loneliness and gave us glimpses into the life of the local folks. It also made real for us Christ’s command to love the neighbour!

SHUC participants are invited to participate in this ministry of hospitality.

Can you help? Forms for both guests and hosts have been created to help build the bridge of relationships. For more information, contact Yvonne Choi at 604 257 4822. *HO*



Advent Bible Reflection

Wednesday, Dec. 3, 10, 17
7:45-9:00 p.m. in the Chapel

“The Strangeness of God”

Three Wednesday evening of Bible reading and reflection on the theme - the “Strangeness of God”.

Session 1: the silence of God – waiting, praying, hoping

Session 2: the “Word” of God – speaking and hearing

Session 3: the Incarnation of God – being and doing

You are invited. No prior experience of Bible study is needed.

The Budget Process

Led by Treasurer John Christie, the Finance Committee is gathering up the wishes and hopes of all the working groups in the congregation in order to prepare a budget for 2003. With the Congregational Meeting planned for February 9th, the budget will be considered by the Council at meetings in December and January. In the church, a budget is a theological statement about what a congregation wants to accomplish and what is believed to be important for God’s sake in the world.

Each SHUC household can do its part by ensuring that the 2003 Commitment Forms have been returned to the Church Office and by contributing regularly through offering envelopes or Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR). If you are not already contributing, please contact the Church Office for envelopes or to register for PAR.

Action Table News

The following items are available at the Action Table in the Church Hall following each Sunday service -

United Church Christmas cards: choice of 4 different packets @ \$6.00 for 10 cards
United Church Calendars for 2003 @ \$7.00 each.

Embroidered note cards: these are hand made by a women's group in Malawi, Africa

Entertainment Books for 2003 @ \$46.00 each

If you are not able to pick these items up at the church, please call Margaret Walker at 266-9365.

Library News

Pat Hudson writes: In January of 2002, Pat Thorsteinsson gave an informal talk to the SHUC Men’s Group (Men ’n Muffins). His text was The Bible as a Living Document. It was suggested that he reduce it to writing to make it available to a wider audience. The Library is pleased to have copies available for circulation.

We are indebted to Nancy Brodie for her gift of a framed limited edition copy of a reproduction of the First Chapter of Genesis, drawn from Gutenberg’s original masterpiece, written in Latin. A copy of the explanation of the history of Johannes Gutenberg’s revolutionary invention, the art of the printed word, is in the library.

NEW BOOKS

290 A Islam, A Short History by Karen Armstrong.

This revised and updated edition, by "One of the world’s foremost scholars on religious affairs", has been requested by our congregation. It concludes with discussion questions, making it a suitable text for group study.

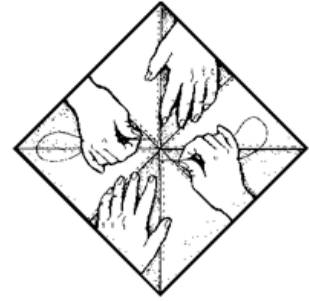
136.4C The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander, by Barbara Coloroso.

The author of "Kids are Worth It", addresses an issue that some teachers and parents face each day, from preschool to high school. She offers help to "break the cycle of violence". The author draws on her decade of working with troubled youth, and conflict resolution.

BOOK SALE PURCHASES

We have added to our collection of current paperbacks, suitable for leisure reading.

Our thanks to all who contributed books to the October sale. It was a resounding success! Our team of sellers, led by Pat McKenzie, Betty Ann Knickerbocker and Don Hudson, once again proved that they missed their calling. Their skill behind the counter was formidable! Thanks you to all for their support.



Stitch and Chat

Margaret Walker writes:

We have wool...lots of wool!
We have a friend...who likes to sew together squares.
We have babies...who need warm wool blankets.
We have no knitters....
If you can help knit 7" squares you will make many people happy. For further information please call 604-266-9365.

Also! If you’re looking for that **Special Christmas Gift** - why not visit the Stitch and Chat table in the Church hall after Sunday worship and see the wonderful handmade items available for purchase!

Bridge-building

Yvonne Choi writes: We made over \$200 in total from the Asian Food Sale at the Open House. A great work of our team! Most of all, I'd like to thank June Wing, Kenneth Cheung and his 2 daughters Andrea and Abigail so much who have contributed not only with the most delicious Chinese Foods (noodles/barbecue pork & ham, Sushi) but also with their time to sell these foods at the Open House. We sold a dish of 4 different samplers for \$3.00 and at the end, we lowered the price to \$2.00 and sold another 10 dishes.

Volunteer Workers at Food Sale: We recruited a group of Asian women who regularly come to our English Conversation Class to work as volunteer sales women at Asian Food Sale and they did a wonderful job and everybody who participated expressed how friendly our church members were to them and they really enjoyed the event. They took their kids and husbands out to the event, which was really an encouraging sign for the future of SHUC.

SHOCK!

(Shaughnessy Heights Outrageous Christian Kids)
A Mid-week Group for Folks in Grades 5,6 & 7

November 26, 2002—SHUC Scavenger Hunt

- When:** 7:00 to 8:30 pm
Where: Oakridge Mall—meet at the Food Court at 7 pm.
For your instructions
What: A hunt through the mall for members of SHUC. Participants will find members of the congregation in the mall who will have important clues to an Advent puzzle.
Who: If you are in grades 5,6 or 7, come to participate. If you are not in these grades but would like to be hunted, contact Cathy Cryder (604 261 6377).
Why: Because it will be loads of fun!
If you wish to participate Cathy will need a signed waiver form. Participants will be sent out in teams of no less than 3 people.

December 3, 2002—SHOCK Advent Celebration

- When:** 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Where: SHUC Youth Centre and Gym
What: A time to celebrate together the waiting for and wonder of hope and love being born in our world. Come to worship, play, learn and eat!

December 10, 2002

- When:** SHOCK Outreach Night
Where: SHUC Youth Centre and Gym
What: Time to put together the Care Packages for First United Church and the Wish Centre. And, as always, snack!

Stay tuned for more info about “A Visit to the Stable” on Sunday, December 22nd!

Gifts for Kate Booth House

Cathy Cryder writes: Kate Booth House is a transition house for women, who have been battered and abused, and their children. Each year Kate Booth House holds a Christmas party for residents and past residents. What can we at SHUC do to help? On November 24th and December 1st (or any time during the week, up to December 4th) we can bring a wrapped gift for a child. The gift needs to be labelled on the outside (e.g., Boy 6 to 10 years or girl 3 to 5 years). The “Giving Tree” will be located in the foyer until November 30th and then it will be moved to the Sanctuary. Please keep Kate Booth House in mind as you consider your Christmas giving.

Bottle and Can Drive

The youth group is going to start a bottle and can drive. There will be a container at the church for deposit (once we find a mutually agreeable space) or for larger quantities they can be picked up by calling either Gayle Ansley or a member of the Senior Youth Group.

Angels Abandon Reason for Hope

Ross White writes: One of my favourite scriptures about youth ministry is the one of teenage Mary, mother of Jesus. As an unwed young woman, she had everything to lose and nothing to gain. Listen to Mary’s response to angel Gabriel:

“Here am I, the servant of the Lord. Let it be with me according to your word.”

How is that for the unequivocal loyalty and dedication of youth? Not only that, the spontaneity of Mary’s response is disarming. She ‘ponders’ perhaps only minutes as she wonders aloud, “How can this happen? I’m not even married?” There is immediacy to Mary’s willingness to go for broke, throw caution to the wind, and say yes with reckless abandon!

The church today has all but lost the capacity to invite youth to say yes to challenges of a life-changing magnitude. We ask for an hour here or weekend there, but we underestimate the whole-hearted commitment youth are prepared to give so that some new life might emerge. But it still happens!

We wondered “What to do with the extra wieners and buns from the Open House?” Members of the SHUC senior youth group spontaneously and eagerly volunteered to form a downtown East-side Hot Dog Brigade on Saturday October 19, once the Open House kiosk was all cleaned up from the front of the church.

The scripture above sort of came to life for me that day. In the story Gabriel explains to Mary the “Holy Spirit will come upon you.” And further that, “Nothing will be impossible with God.” In other words the Holy Spirit is more than a ‘feel good’ momentary rush of positivistic energy. It is the power that confirms that God will get the credit, and no one else.

The street people the youth served that day basically told us that message. Several asked, “Where do you come from? Who are you guys?” But when we said Shaughnessy Heights United Church they munched on their hot dogs and said things like: “God is good” or, “God bless you”!

The serving began and ended there at Oppenheimer Park with such rapidity, it was hard to assess what had really happened. Perhaps like Mary it came down to the simple willingness to put hope into action. In the midst of the harsh realities of depressing suffering, hardening poverty, the devastation of AIDS, anorexia, rape, homelessness, drug addiction... the embodiment of hope calls for more recruits. The advent story beckons us into a passionate loyalty that aligns our lives with the Word of God and with the ones who we think God might ask last. The most eloquent phrase came on the ride home. “It was scary!” No wonder Gabriel said: “Don’t be afraid . . . God is pleased with you.”

Ross White works with Senior Youth and is currently developing a Youth Ministry Team/Committee to envision new possibilities. Reach him at rosswhite@shuc.bc.ca

Music Notes

Cathy Pedersen, Director of Music, writes: “We look for a star in the eastern sky...” And so the season of waiting begins. Advent is a special time of the year, when we celebrate the act of waiting. Just as the secular world has many tasks leading up to the holiday season, so do church musicians. The choirs have been practising Advent and Christmas anthems since the beginning of October and our busiest time of the year is just around the corner. I hope that you will be able to join the musicians at Shaughnessy for all that the season has to offer, including Christmas carols before all of the Advent Sunday services, the “King’s Quilt” musical drama on December 8th and the Candlelight Christmas Carol service on Sunday Dec. 15. Members of the Songsters, Youth Choir and Sanctuary Choir will help you to celebrate the Advent and Christmas season with an abundance of great music from many places and times.

The past month has been one of many musical gifts. Thank you to members of the Vancouver Philharmonic, to Gord Robertson and friends, to Jocelyn Pritchard and Carol Pelkner and to Marian Turner for their wonderful contributions to worship on Sundays. There will be more special music during December, including appearances by Baroque and Medieval musicians.

As always, there is a wonderful wealth of seasonal music available across the city, including here at the church. Phoenix Choir will hold their annual Christmas concert on December 22 and it is always well-received (the treats are fabulous)

Enjoy the season and keep singing



The King’s Quilt

(A Musical Drama)

The story of a greedy king who finds happiness only when he gives away all of his possessions.

Starring members of SHUC congregation and choirs. Drama written and directed by Lee Bolton with music by Cathy Pedersen. Quilt made by Lee Bolton and Gwen Horne.

This project will be presented on White Gift Sunday December 8th during the Sunday service.



Candlelight Christmas Carol Service Sunday December 15, 4:30 p.m.

Come and join the Songsters, Youth choir and the Sanctuary Choir as they present anthems of Advent Christmas and Epiphany. Sing along with well-loved Carols of the season. Stay after for treats. Enjoy the Candles, the carols and the choirs

Faith Formation

Gayle Ansley writes: We come to the Church from many different backgrounds. Some have been brought up in the Church, some left and came back and others are new to Christianity. While this may be a wide range of experiences, the common thread is that, however we entered the doors of the Church, we need to continue to explore our faith.

The focus of Christian Education this year is Faith Formation. While that may seem like a “no-brainer” we need to explore what this means in practical terms.

Faith is dynamic and needs nurture and examination to grow and mature. We recognize this as essential in church school but it is no less important for adults.

How do we do this? Community is the best place. Sunday morning and Wednesday evening services are a good place to start. Check out the church library. Pat Hudson would be able to make suggestions. Start thinking now about joining the Disciple Bible Study next year. Join one of the Thursday morning study groups. During Lent Cathy Cryder will lead a Faith Exploration Study for those with questions of faith.

At home we can try to make prayer a more important part of our lives. In the book “How Do You Spell God? Answers to the Big Questions from Around the World,” Marc Gellman and Thomas Hartman use a Prayer Hand to show the basic elements of prayer with one part written on each finger and Amen written on the palm.

Wow (Approach) – Loving God, Dear God, Creator...

Thanks (Thanksgiving) – Thank you God for

Oops (Confession) I’m sorry for.....

I want (Intercession for self) I’d like, I need help with....

I remember (Intercession for others) Please bless/help....

Amen (So be it!)

It’s a start!



Thanks to members of the Senior Youth Group who went around the neighbourhood posting leaflets to advertise SHUC’s Open House.



The following children were baptized on October 20th:

- Fraser Newbury-Jones
- Emma Amelia Rowlands Nobbs
- Thomas James Rowlands Nobbs
- Alexander Richard Katrusiak

Pipe Dreams

A monthly column by Roy Campbell, SHUC Organist

We have been blessed these last few months with guest musicians taking part in our morning worship. The sharing of these talents and unique gifts has spiritually enriched all of us. Upon reflection, one could say that such musicians are mystics. The mystic seeks union with God beyond the intellectual and human experience, and always in solitude. The contemplative world of the musician, the world of practice and self-discipline, is also done in solitude and is a necessary ingredient that allows the Spirit to bring the music to a more profound place than ever thought possible. The gift of such artists is the ability to express the inexpressible and thus bring us to a mystical place.

The role of mystic is not limited to a chosen few, but is open to all of us. By singing hymns, for example, we have the opportunity to become mystics by expressing the inexpressible - God's love for us. One of my favourite hymns is *Breathe on Me, Breath of God*. Its interplay of music and text never ceases to transport me to that mystical place. Even though it is only a simple prayer, the singing of this hymn enables the spirit of God to breathe in and through us. Once we have allowed ourselves to be open to God, then we can begin to offer our music to God as prayer. No longer ruled by our egos, we can begin to explore fully our relationship with God, a relationship that will inevitably transform all of our relationships with the people of God. This exploration is what others are craving to hear in our music. Your role and mine, like that of the minister, is really that of spiritual guide. We cannot perform our duties adequately unless we take our own spiritual journey seriously by offering our music to God as a form of prayer. Remember - always pray your music.

Soli deo Gloria

SHUC's Handbell Choir

The early history of the Baroque organ (mid 17th to mid 18th centuries) witnessed the revival of the *zimbelstern* - a high pitched, indeterminately tuned set of bells annexed to the organ from Turkish military parades which added gloss and complemented the music with high pitched sparkle. Bells continued to fascinate commoners and theologians alike into the twentieth century, as the following quote by Thomas Merton (*Thoughts in Solitude*) illustrates: "Bells are meant to remind us that God alone is good, that we belong to Him, that we are not living for this world. They break in upon our cares in order to remind us that all things pass away and that our preoccupations are not important. They speak to us of our freedom which responsibilities and transient cares make us forget." If you would like to be free of the cares of this world, why not consider joining SHUC's newly formed hand bell choir? At last count we need about eight hundred more pounds of bell ringers. I'd be delighted to hear from you! *Roy Campbell*



Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network - PLAN

Several members have asked for further information about PLAN, whose work was described by Beryl Sawyer in her interview with Harry Oussoren in a worship service last month.

Beryl Sawyer writes: **If you were asked: "What makes for a good life?" I wonder what you'd say. When a group of senior parents started to dream for their intellectually challenged children they came up with some answers - a vision of a future where people with disabilities:**

- ◆ enjoy financial security.
- ◆ live in a home that is a sanctuary
- ◆ participate in a caring and hospitable community
- ◆ are supported by family and friends
- ◆ have wishes and choices respected
- ◆ are protected from abuse and exploitation
- ◆ make contributions to their communities
- ◆ have families who enjoy peace of mind.

Quite a good list wouldn't you say? And to achieve these aims it is PLAN's belief that the organization must be independent from government funding in order to advocate for people with disabilities when parents are no longer able to provide support; that the gifts and capacities of our relatives with disabilities can be enlisted for the betterment of the communities where they live; that many loving relationships are the best guarantee of safety and security in uncertain times; that families who have a relative with a disability are the best custodians of PLAN's vision for the future of our relatives.

I have our son, Colin, to thank for introducing me to the people in PLAN who have become such good friends, almost family. PLAN has expanded my vision of what is possible - and the work isn't finished yet. Vision sometimes takes a leap of faith that the dream is possible. The 'circles of friends' built around our 'focus people' have achieved far more than was ever dreamed

An organization, begun locally here in the Lower Mainland, is not only spreading throughout Canada, but throughout the world. Yes, start dreaming of what might be possible - and go for it!

Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN) may be found at www.plan.ca or give them a call at 604-439-9566 for more information.

Thanks from Janet!

Janet Livingstone, Church Accountant, writes: I would like to put in a few words of thanks to all of the people who have been so encouraging and supportive of my work at SHUC. I have now completed my first year here (hard to believe!), and am thoroughly enjoying the work and all of the people I see and speak with each week. Your words of kindness and your confidence in me has been overwhelming and I sincerely appreciate all of the positive feedback. I trust that my relationship with SHUC will continue to grow and flourish over the years to come. I'm glad that you are as happy as I am with my work at Shaughnessy!

Presbytery Update

Paul Saxon writes: As part of a commitment to improve communication, made by all presbyters at a recent meeting, here is a brief summary of recent decisions made at Presbytery, with some sense of larger context where appropriate.

At its September meeting, Presbytery approved the hiring of professional financial support to assist with restoring order to its financial affairs. This is not seen as a long-term substitute for a volunteer treasurer, and the search for someone to fill that position is still active. Your suggestions for filling either of these two positions are welcome.

At the October meeting, presbyters discussed a draft 'Covenant of Leadership' that is intended to clarify general expectations of roles and conduct for members of Presbytery. Several congregations in particular, and presbytery members in general, were encouraged to make up any arrears in their contributions, now that the Division of Finance is once again active and taking steps to improve financial management. A job description for the position of Secretary to the Court was distributed, with a request for a volunteer to fill the position.

In addition to statutory obligations set out in the Manual, Presbytery is also able to take on projects which would be impossible for single congregations. Two important examples are the recently inaugurated Chinese Ministry, and the long standing and successful YAYA (Youth And Young Adult) Ministry. YAYA costs are shared equally with Burrard Presbytery. Presbytery approved a YAYA budget of \$79,600 for the coming year. About two-thirds of this is staff cost, and the remainder goes to program and administrative costs. Wilson Heights United Church makes a significant 'in-kind' contribution in the form of space and administrative support for the program.

Finally, at the October meeting, Presbytery passed a motion approving the General Council 37 Remit #7 (reorganization from four courts to three) by a close vote of 20 to 17.

If you have questions about any of the foregoing, I would be happy to discuss Presbytery business with you either personally, or via email at saxonpdc@portal.ca.



The SHUC Men's Group meets over coffee and muffins in the SHUC Lounge on the first and third Saturday of each month. All men are welcome to attend! The next meeting is at 8 a.m. on Saturday 7 December in the SHUC Lounge. The subject is "Be Still!". How do you find stillness and quiet in your busy life?

We are counting on you!

Jeff Kroeker, Chair, Finance Committee writes: At this time of year we all receive many "mailings" from a wide variety of organizations. These organizations need funding to deal with local, national or international issues dear to our hearts: schools that advance literacy, clinics that provide health care, or food that alleviates hunger. As Christians we are called to reach out to the poor amongst us and these organizations provide us with an effective avenue to fulfil this mission. As you consider these requests please also reflect upon the work that takes place at SHUC every week.

We are now planning for 2003, and in preparation for this upcoming year we are seeking your guidance. Will you "partner" with us in under-girding the programs for next year? The church fulfils its mission through its programs, the diligent work of the staff and the many volunteers who deliver these programs.

What should the magnitude of our programming be for 2003? We need your feedback to answer this question.

A letter and pledge form was sent to you in the mail. If you have not already completed and returned your pledge form for 2003 please do it immediately. Thank you to those who have sent in their pledge forms. We have received pledge forms from 85 households to November 17, but need to hear from the rest of you so that we can be good stewards of the SHUC financial resources.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of this request.

Sandwiches for First

Phyllis Hayter writes: Winter is approaching and it may be a good idea if we could send more than ten loaves on 'our' Tuesday. Please check the sheet that will be at the Action Table on Sunday, November 24th and Sunday, December 1st. The sandwiches will be delivered to First United on Tuesday December 3rd.

Women of the Church!

Phyllis Hayter writes: Women of the Church Christmas Party will be held on Monday, December 16th from 7pm - 9pm. Please bring a plate for four, wine or what you would like. I will provide tea coffee and punch. Address: 4875 Connaught Dr (kitty corner to the manse). No sign up sheet!



Memorial services were held for the following friends or members of SHUC during the past month:

Jean Bowen
Mildred Hall
Eleanor Bush
Benjamin McConnell
Cliff Ingham

Communications Committee

Q&A

Heather Clarke, Chair of SHUC Communications Committee, writes: (Heather can be reached at heather.clarke@shaw.ca)

What does the Communications Committee do?

The Communications Committee is responsible for developing a communication plan for SHUC. The plan includes identifying the messages we want to communicate and to whom. Our SHUC messages need to be based on our vision and four pillars – and the Communications Committee is responsible for assisting in the development of these messages. In addition, we need to identify who the audiences are for particular messages and how and when these messages need to be provided.

Why is it important to have a Communications Committee?

Communication and relationships are critical to the health and well-being of SHUC – its members, its community and neighbourhood, and its potential members. Fulfilling SHUC's mission depends on its health and well-being. We believe that a proactive, thoughtful and comprehensive approach to communication throughout the church will assist in building and maintaining healthy relationships and contribute to SHUC's mission.

Who is involved in the Communications Committee?

Our members include Alison McLean, Mae Sagar, Jim McLellan and Ross White, with myself as chair. When web work is required, Bob Bruce joins us with his expertise. But these are just the "official" members of the Committee – the "unofficial" ones include Council, the committees, staff, volunteers – in other words all of us.

Where do I fit in?

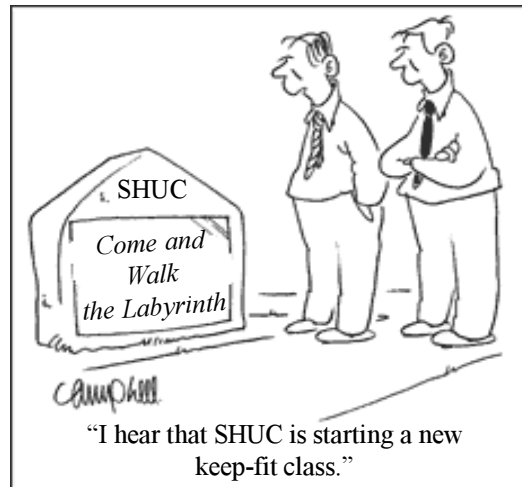
So where do you fit in? For starters: you are the most important medium through which SHUC's messages are communicated. You are our voice! Your input is also needed – input about who our audiences are and how they like to be communicated with? Input about events, opportunities, and needs that should be part of SHUC's messages.

What are the primary ways SHUC communicates?

There are primarily three ways – through relationships and the spoken word, through print and via the World Wide Web. Communication through relationships occurs all the time, but is more formalized in our meetings, group learning and volunteer work – and of course our preaching and teaching. We use lots of print, including the weekly *Grapevine* and of course this monthly newsletter. Then there are also the financial donation envelopes, posters and notices. And very soon we'll launch our new web site with a focus on communications not only within our congregation but reaching far beyond.

How can we support *The Grapevine* Newsletter?

There are many ways – but let me focus on just one at this time. We are exploring ways to get the *Grapevine* Newsletter to our members without using the services of Canada Post. If we could increase the number that get picked up or delivered by hand and/or increase the number that are received in only electronic form (SHUC website or e-mail) we could significantly reduce our costs. So here's what you can do – pick up your own *Grapevine* and perhaps those of others who aren't there and deliver them. You can also help offset the costs of producing and distributing *Grapevine* by make a donation – and some of you did in the envelope included in the last issue. If you haven't yet sent in a contribution – please consider doing so! Thank you.



New Members received:

Jean Ebert
Nancy Templeton
Jane Rowlands
Stephen Nobbs



Happy Birthday!

Betty Roaf celebrates her 90th birthday on December 5th. Betty has been a member of this congregation for many years and her son, Norm, and daughter, Julie, invite you to come and celebrate her birthday in the Church Hall after worship on Sunday 8 December. Coffee and birthday cake will be served!

December 5th is also an important date in another SHUC household because it's the date on which **Gordon How** celebrates his 60th birthday! Congratulations on reaching pensionable age Gordon!

Many happy returns to Betty and Gordon from all your friends at SHUC!

SHUC's new website

We hope to have the new, improved website launched by the end of the year. It will have a new look, be more use friendly, have much more information, and be interactive. There will be greater use of photographs, artwork and personalization. HC.

NOVEMBER

A poem composed by Rosemary Leckie

We seldom welcome November
Dismal, dreary and dark
Gone is the warmth of sunshine
And the lyrical song of the lark.
The vibrant leaves have faded
And lie dying underfoot
And our walks are far more brisk
Than those we earlier took.
We know the days are shorter
But now longer can they seem
With dimming light and frosty night
We shiver time away.

Solitary November, a time alone – apart
Autumn now has passed and winter's yet to start
Two seasons – November being the bridge between
Inviting us to cross and discover what's unseen
Open to receive those thoughts that float before the dream.
Like seeds and roots below the ground
Quiet, resting and alive
Our times of contemplation
Help new ideas to arrive.

How we would miss November
If this month we could somehow lose
Comforting, pensive, pregnant, this is the month to choose
To see calligraphy of branches against the sombre sky
To marvel at the remaining rose, still there, not yet to die
To see the raindrops splash and drench and blur the inbetween
To see the myriad shades of grey in puddle, cloud and scene.

Our year has four seasons intended
And then comes November – suspended –
A time when hope helps spirits lift
November is the added gift.

Centering Prayer

Several SHUC folk attended a workshop given by Cynthia Bourgeault, at the Chalmers Institute at VST, on November 1 - 2. As a result, a small group of those interested in adding a contemplative dimension to their lives is now meeting each week at 6.15 p.m., before Wednesday Worship, to practice Centering Prayer. If you would be interested to find out more about this subject, or possibly even to join the group, please call Lee McKimm at 604-739-0620 for further details.

Centering Prayer is an ancient form of Christian meditation aimed at furthering the inward journey. It complements the intercessory or discursive prayer that we practice in worship because it aims to empty and clear the mind of any thoughts during each approximately 20 minute session. A sacred word may be used to help the process of letting go of thoughts and emotions so as to be able to rest quietly in the presence of God. Further details can be found at www.centeringprayer.com. or in the book "Open Mind, Open Heart" by Fr. Thomas Keating. PF



Thank you to:

Christine Loudon, Jan Loudon, Joy Bruce and Ashley Carmody for their late night help in placing stamps on the Open House Issue of the Grapevine.

Norm Barr for the long-overdue cleaning of the boiler room.

Margaret Walker, Pat McKenzie and Jean Campbell for the numerous hours spent in collating and filling envelopes for the recent Stewardship drive: "Commitment 2003"

The numerous volunteers who come in each Friday morning to collate and fold bulletins for each Sunday worship service.

Musicians who have participated in the 'Organ Plus One' series in Sunday Worship: Members of the Vancouver Philharmonic Orchestra, Gord Robertson and Forte, Jocelyn Pritchard and Carol Pelkner and Marian Turner.

Paul Saxon as he steps down after two years as Chair of the Nominations Committee

Margot Arbogast and all who helped make the Open House happen.

SHUC Bake Sale

Phyllis Hayter writes: Many, many thanks for all those who took the time to bake and contribute to the Open House Bake Sale. The response was overwhelming with three tables of fantastic goodies! Thank you! Also a great big thank you to all those who came to buy from the wonderful selections. The results of this team effort brought in \$581.75 including the donations from Carol Turner's Tea Table.

Some comments before the sale:

Pat Mackenzie: "My muffins were baked this morning and they're still warm!"

Marg Perry: "My rum cake has one cup of rum- the bottle of rum was over \$20!"

Linda Sherlock: "My husband Ken (the only declared male contributor) baked the butter tarts!"

Comments after the sale:

Brian Forster: "That date loaf was as good as you said - really delicious!"

Vernon Lum - retired professional baker: "The butter tarts were very, very good"

**Award Winning
AcademyWest Choirs
are pleased to present**

**Angels Singing... a
candlelight concert**

**Join us for a wonderful evening of
joyous seasonal music
featuring over 90 singers in four choirs.**

Saturday December 14th - 7:30 pm

***Shaughnessy Heights United Church*
1550 W. 33rd (33rd and Granville)
Vancouver**

**Tickets: Adults - \$12.00 Senior/
Student/Child \$10.00**

AcademyWest is a registered non-profit society and
has charitable tax status.
Charitable tax number: 883734225RR0001

Did you find all 17 Books?

Thank you to Art Nordman for last month's Bible Brain-twister!
Contributed by **John Kezer**

I once made a **remark** about the hidden books of the Bible. It was a **lulu**, **kept** people looking so hard for **facts**, and for others it was a **revelation**. Some were in a **jam**, especially since the names of the books are not capitalized, but the **truth** finally struck home to **numbers** of readers. To others, it was a real **job**. We want it to be a **most** fascinating few moments for you. **Yes**, **there** will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require **judges** to help them. I will quickly admit **it** usually takes a minister to find one of the 17, and there will be loud **lamentations** when it is found. A little lady say **she brews** a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can **compete**. **Relax** now, for there really are the names of 17 books of the Bible in these sentences. (One preacher found 16 books in 20 minutes. It took him three weeks to find the seventeenth one.)

The Grapevine

is the Newsletter of:

Shaughnessy Heights United Church
1550 West 33rd Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6M 1A7

Tel.: 604-261-6377 Fax: 604-261-3102

Online at: www.shuc.bc.ca

Editors: Philip Francis. Email: philipfrancis@shaw.ca and
Harry Oussoren. Email: harry_oussoren@shuc.bc.ca
Production and Distribution - Nina Matthews & Pat McKenzie

Worship at SHUC

In Advent we wait and prepare to celebrate the coming of Christ. In Advent, blue is the dominant liturgical colour. Again this year, red, white, yellow, and black banners, representing the earth's four directions, mark our week by week journey to Bethlehem.

Worship on Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

December 4: Worship in the Taize style. Prayers, readings, and chants – led by Roslyn Richardson.

December 11: Communion, Prayer, and scripture

December 18: Communion, Prayer, and scripture

December 25 and January 1: no mid-week services

January 8: Worship resumes.

Saturday, November 30 – “Hanging the Greens”

4:00 p.m. Decorating and Creating an Advent Resource for homes

5:30 p.m. Song, Carols, and Prayers to launch Advent

6:00 p.m. International Potluck Supper – bring dishes & cutlery along with an “international” dish to feed five.

Sunday, December 1 – Advent 1 – Red Banner

9:50 a.m. Carols before Worship

10 a.m. Communion Service – non-perishable food is collected for First UC

2:00 p.m. Grieving Service – for those grieving the loss of loved ones and other loss. Reception follows.

Sunday, December 8 – Advent 2 – White Banner – White Gift Sunday

9:50 a.m. Carols before Worship

10 a.m. Worship. The “King’s Quilt” Musical will be performed – a story of life in giving.

White Gifts are collected: food, personal products and money.

Sunday, December 15 – Advent 3 – Yellow Banner

9:50 a.m. Carols before Worship

10 a.m. Worship.

4:30 p.m. Candlelight Carols and Music Service – all choirs
Reception and Finger Food Potluck follows.

Sunday, December 22 – Advent 4 – Black Banner

9:50 a.m. Carols before Worship

10 a.m. Family Worship – Children’s Nativity Tableau

2 p.m. Grieving Service – for all in church and community grieving loss. Reception follows

Tuesday, December 24 – Christmas Eve

4:30 p.m. Children’s Service

7:30 p.m. Family Christmas Service – all Choirs

11:00 p.m. Candlelight Communion Service

Wednesday, December 25 – Christmas Day

10:30 a.m. Westside Christmas Service at West Pt. Grey United Church, 4595 West 8th Avenue.

Sunday, December 29 – 10 a.m. Worship Service