



150+ Years



150th Anniversary Legacy Project

February & March ~ Newsletter

Items of Interest

- 9:00 am Worship with Communion in the Chapel
- 11:00 am Worship in the Sanctuary
- Live Streaming 11:00 am service see page 17

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February 12 Sunday 11 am

Vision for British Columbia

Lieutenant Governor the Honourable Steven Point



Photo by Stan Funt

February 19 Sunday 11 am

Black History Month

Music & Message with Louise Rose

Office Hours
Monday to Friday
9:00—12:00 noon
1:00—4:30 pm

First+Metropolitan United Church
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Phone 250-388-5188 Fax 250-388-5186
www.firstmetvictoria.com

Volume 10
Issue 1

Enneagram Conference

Together. One mind, one heart, one body

Enneagram Conference – Western Canada

February 17 – 19, 2012



Hosted by The Canadian Institute for Enneagram Studies

Focusing on aspect of our lives, on our personal inner journeys, our health, our family, work, community, and spiritual practices.

*~Open to anyone interested in learning and discussing the Enneagram.
No prior knowledge required~*

First†Met Discounted
Group Rate \$100.00
Register with Sharon at
the church office
250-388-5188 ext 221

Location: Goward House
2495 Arbutus Rd.
Victoria, BC

**Cost: \$120 before November 30, 2011
& \$150 after.**
**15% discount for students
with valid ID.**

Cash or cheques made payable to CIES can be mailed to
3995 Blenkinsop Rd. Victoria, BC V8P 3P8

For more information, please contact:
Natalia@canadianenneagram.ca or Sylvia @ (250) 477-1148



Kung Jaadee — Haida Storyteller

Sunday, March 4

1:30 -3:00 pm

10 per person, \$20 per family
\$5 for low income/student/ children

Kung Jaadee is a traditional Haida singer, drummer, and storyteller and one of Canada's leading aboriginal performers. She has given hundreds of performances all over Canada since 1992. She performs for children and adults at festivals, schools, universities, conferences, workshops, and on TV and radio.

"...balm for the soul, enthralling, highly recommended..." (Montreal Gazette)

"Raven causes magic...[Kung Jaadee's] compelling delivery keeps her audience enraptured with these magical tales...a wonderful show, and perfect for two-leggeds of all ages." (TheatreInLondon.ca)

"Four Stars" (Saskatoon Star-Phoenix)

Art As Spiritual Practice!

*"Lovers find secret places inside this violent world
where they make transactions with beauty." – Rumi*



Do you like to paint, play with crayons, do collage, play with clay?

This group is about experiencing the presence of Spirit working through us as we create. It's about playing, exploring, and having fun in Sacred Space. No prior artistic experience is necessary, just a willingness to play with materials and to allow things to evolve. We invite those interested in making things, and those who also might wish to share their gifts with others.

Join us **January 29th** from 11:45 am – 2:15 pm for soup lunch (\$5), collage, sharing stories, and a time of planning as you help shape this program.

Please bring magazines, scissors and \$5 for lunch. Other supplies will be provided.

To Register, go to church website www.firstmetvictoria.com then to upcoming events or call the church office at 250-388-5188 ext. 221 or for contact Leanne Benoit 250-388-5188 ext. 225, leanne.benoit@firstmetvictoria.com or Linda Mulhall 250-479-8410, l.mulhall@shaw.ca

Maximum 24 participants. Registration deadline January 26, 5:00 pm

“Living Through Grief”

A Bereavement Group for those who have lost a loved one.



We live in a society that does not value grief, nor does it allow any time for it. Yet grieving allows us to honour those we have loved, to recognize all that we gained through our relationship with them, and to acknowledge and heal those areas where there may have been wounding, or unfinished business.

This support group provides participants with the opportunity to be with their grief with deep self-compassion and gradually, to move more vibrantly back into their lives. It brings a spiritual dimension to the process of grief. Through guided meditation, poetry, journaling, small group discussion we will explore together: How We Grieve, and the importance of grieving; the Three Stages of Sorrow; Where We Store Our Grief, recognizing and releasing those areas in our bodies where we store grief; Necessary Losses and Ways of Coping; Completing Unfinished Communication ; Speaking From The Heart; Caring For Self; and Finding the Inner Centre.

The approach is InterSpiritual: respectful of all backgrounds, drawing on a variety of spiritual practices from Buddhist, Sufi, Christian traditions. No previous experience in meditation is necessary.

You are welcome to attend the first session and decide if you’d like to commit to the following four sessions.

After the first session, the group will be closed.

THIS OFFERING IS OPEN TO EVERYONE, ALL ARE WELCOME!

Facilitator: Linda Mulhall, MEd

Times: Five Tuesdays, 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Dates: Jan. 24; Feb. 7, 21, & 28; March 6th, 2012.

Location: Doreene McLeod Room, First Met United Church, 932 Balmoral Road, Victoria

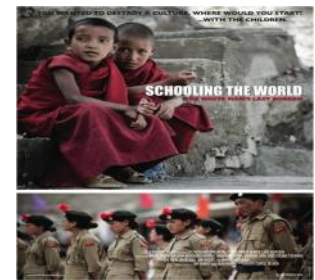
Register Online at: www.firstmetvictoria.com or call the office at 250-388-5188

For further information, please contact: Linda Mulhall at l.mulhall@shaw.ca OR 250-479-8410

Visit my website at: www.spiritcall.ca

Jan 23 ~ 3rd Annual Climate Action Film Series ~ Room 200/7:00 PM

Sponsored by First+Met Outreach Committee



Jan 23 ~ *The Economics of Happiness*

Far from the old institutions of power, people are starting to forge a very different future...

Feb 27 ~ *The Dark Side of Chocolate*

Is the chocolate we eat produced with the use of child labour and trafficked children? Award winning Danish journalist decides to investigate the rumours.

Mar 26 ~ *The Business of Gold*

Documents one struggle, the resistance of the Mayan-mam people against the Canadian company Goldcorp Inc.

Apr 23 *Schooling the World*

Calls for a “deeper dialogue” between cultures, suggesting we have at least as much to learn as to teach, and that these ancient sustainable societies may harbour knowledge that is vital for our own survival.

Meet our 150th Anniversary Honourary Chairs



Rev Laura Butler

For some 30 years, Laura ministered at Metropolitan United Church. Part of a family of ministers, Laura was the first woman to be ordained by the Methodist Church within the Boston area. Her camping ministry continues to be honoured with the Laura Butler Lodge at Camp Pringle. Likewise, her pastoral presence at times of both joy and sorrow will be long remembered. For many years, Laura lived in the family home with her Auntie Grace, who was a cherished confidant and counselor to her.



Neil Drewry

Neil represents dedicated lay leadership at its best. He became well-known as a First United Visiting Elder and visited parishioners at Glengarry Hospital for some twenty years. Neil served as Chair of Finance and taught Sunday School with his wife Doris. He is a member of the Round Table at the University of Victoria and still manages three golf games and three bridge sessions per week. January 24 marked Neil's 90th birthday!

150th Church Committee Members

This year will truly be a year of celebrations!

Not only is it a celebration of 150+ years of our First+Metropolitan/Metropolitan and First Congregational history, but a 50th Anniversary of the United Church Women.

To assist in facilitating church committee events are:

Sharron Higgins, Chair
Leanne Prestwich
Allan Saunders
Fran Pollet
Andrea Swan/Dave Osmond
David Chamberlin
Don Hodgson
Hayley Henderson
Jean Jenkins
Leonard Jenks
Sheila McDougall
Shirley Chatfield
Marion Denton
Anne McKeachie (Fall, 2012)



150th Anniversary Legacy Project



150th Anniversary Legacy Project

Raise the Roof has been selected as the major 150th Anniversary project to honour the seven Protestant generations who have preceded us here in Victoria.

Our roof is showing clear signs of leakage and wear-and-tear requiring immediate attention. It was the main issue identified as "Condition-Critical" in an engineering report on the condition of all of our buildings.

The cost to complete the project is estimated to be \$475,000. This includes shingles with a 50-year warranty, improvements in roof insulation, seismic roof bracing and heating system repairs. The latter three components can be addressed most cost-effectively during the reshingling task.

During 2011, we learned that a \$50,000 Heritage Building Grant is available from the City of Victoria and that our Trustees will support the endeavor with another \$50,000. Advance fund-raising in 2011 yielded another \$100,000.

This leaves \$275,000 to be raised in 2012.

To achieve this goal, we have developed a 3-part fund-raising strategy. The first part will involve visits with our core financial supporters from within 1st Met. This will take place from Epiphany to Easter (April 8). The second part will be a Public Appeal involving the majority of the congregation, corporate friends outside the church and others. The timeframe for this is from Easter to Pentecost (May 27). We can, of course accept your donation or your commitment in support of the "Roof" project at anytime! Just call the Finance Office @ 250 388 5188 or drop by and ask for Carol or Greg.

Finally, on June 1 we have scheduled a Gala Dinner & silent auction at the impressive Ward Room at CFB Esquimalt. Please mark this on your calendar now! This will be followed by a congregational Celebration on June 3 to mark achievement of our goal with installation starting on June 15.

For further information, please contact Dave Osmond, Herb Pitts or Larry McGill.

Speaking of fundraising for **Raise the Roof** we are pleased announce that Daniel our (Casual Custodian) is offering his painting/tile setting/general reno services to congregation members.

He will **donate 10%** of any earnings to the **Raise The Roof** fund.

For more information contact:

Daniel at 778-440-0155



Children, Youth, Young Adults, and Family



Minister—Megumi Matsuo Saunders, 250-388-5188 ext 235
firstmetkids@firstmetvictoria.com

"Images of God"

What image of God feels closest for you?
 How many images of God have you encountered?

Our Children & Youth are learning and exploring this theme this January & February.

Join us to reflect upon your thoughts about God and expand the horizon to discover new understandings of God.



December was full of excitement!

White Gift Sunday with all the children participating for the service with costumes, dramas, reading, singing and Edmund the llama and a surprise visit of one day old Mary & Joseph, the baby goats. Thank you for your generous White Gifts. We have shared your gifts with people who need them within the church and in the neighbourhood.

December 6: Violence Against Women – Montreal remembrance service. Chris Coleman & Charlayne Thornton- Joe as speakers and our Jewish & Muslim friends joined together to remember and Take Action for Hope.

Christmas Eve 4:30 pm service was so much fun! Not only our congregation but our community friends from 0 to 90 yr all packed the church for the celebration of Christmas. Edmund the llama & Mary & Joseph again made our service more exciting. Thank you to Mary Byrne and many others who were involved in this service.



Christmas Eve 11:00 pm service was led by youth and young adults including our returning young adults. Great to have them back this Christmas time. This quiet contemplative service with scripture reading, Christmas carols, candle light and communion has been getting popular.

Christmas Day service was so much fun with Louise Rose and her jazz musicians!

January has been already full - gathering of Mothers Morning Out, monthly potluck with newly started short music/worship with Louise Rose, Jr. & Sr. Youth Groups. It promises to be a great 2012.

Children, Youth, Young Adults, and Family ~ cont'd

Meg Hickling 's Sexual Health Education workshop was overwhelming with about 800 participants divided into 4 sessions for 3 - 16 yr. Great learning and outreach for what we believe - learning more about this gift from God. (Meg's books are available from the office @ \$20.00)



Youth programs: Jan 22 Epiphany for Youth
Jan.27 Skating with other youth groups.

Lent Happening

Full of Excitement in December,

Full of learning in January,

Time of reflection and action in February & March, as we journey together to the cross.

We are now preparing **the Lenten booklet** – devotion for during Lent. Stories of encounter with God in everyday life & hope. They will be ready for the middle of February.



SUPER FRIENDS: this will be our Lenten project theme. We will learn more about emergency response to the world disasters, crises- how we (church) respond and what we can do.

Our Lenten book will be available by mid-February.

Every Sunday morning from 9:30 to 10:15 am Children's Choir

February & March Schedule

- Feb 3 Mothers Morning Out (Rhythm Band)
- Feb 10 Family Fun Pot luck with Louise Rose (Bring your instruments)
Jr Sr Youth Group
- Feb 17 Mothers Morning Out
- Feb 19 Mardi Gras with Lunch & games
- Feb 22 Ash Wednesday & Pancake supper
- Feb 24 Jr Youth Group
- Mar 2 Mothers Morning Out (Rhythm band)
- Mar 9 Family Fun Potluck with Louise Rose
Jr & Sr Youth Group

- Mar 10 - Mar 24 Spring Break

- Mar 23 Jr Youth Group.
- Apr 1 Palm Sunday
- Apr 5 Maundy Thursday Potluck service
- Apr 6 Good Friday
- Apr 8 Easter

Information for next two Newsletters ~ due dates

Please have your next newsletter articles into the church office no later that March 15. This next newsletter will be for April/May and will be out Sunday April 1. The following will be the Summer Newsletter—June/July/August and the due date will be May 15th out for Sunday May 27th. Remember I always like working ahead. If your articles are done, you don't have to wait for the due date. Thanks!

United Church Women's Group

We are committed to the UCW purpose - To unite the women of the congregation for the total mission of the church and to provide a medium through which they may express their loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship, and service.

UCW MEETINGS

First†Met has two UCW groups - Mildred Mossop Unit and Unity Unit.

February and March Meeting schedule:

Mildred Mossop	Feb. 13 and March 12
Unity	Feb. 16 and March 15
Executive Meetings	Feb. 27 and March 26

**Meetings are held in the Doreene McLeod room at the Church.
We welcome new members and visitors!**

UCW NEWS:

2012 will be a year of celebrations! The UCW is making plans not only to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Church but is also making plans for the celebration of the 50th year of "**United Church Women**".

The UCW collects complete Campbell soup labels, Island Farms product codes, eye glasses, tabs from pop cans, and stamps. Did you know that we collect unused machine stamped envelopes - the ones that come in your "junk" mail? Save them and leave them in the box across from the Office.

FINANCIAL NEWS:

UCW donated \$300 to the First†Met Library. This is designated for teen books.

At our Annual General Meeting we revised our 2012 budget to include a \$1000 donation to the **Raise the Roof Campaign** and funds to finance celebrations of the 50th and 150th Anniversaries!

SPECIAL EVENTS

First†Met UCW is part of the South Island Presbyterial. Next Presbyterial meeting is on January 26 at Shady Creek United Church on East Saanich Road. Look for details in the Bulletin.

UCW organized an Ecumenical Advent Service on December 5. We invited women from 17 churches to a coffee party in the Fellowship Hall at 10am followed by an Advent Service in the Chapel at 11am. The theme was "**Come Visit the Stable**". We wish to thank those who attended and participated in this special Advent coffee party and service. A special thank you to Joan Dowse who organized and lead the service.

UCW Annual General Meeting was held on January 9, 2012 in the Doreene McLeod room at 11am. We had members from both the Mildred Mossop Unit and Unity. After the meeting, lunch was provided by the Executive. This was followed by a speaker from the Compassionate Resource Warehouse. Del Wergeland was an inspirational speaker. She motivated us to head home to sort out unused household things such as sewing items, cookie tins, stuffed toys, nuts and bolts, and The Compassionate Warehouse even shipped sinks, toilets and shower-heads overseas! Look for more information about how we can support this amazing organization.

Women Exploring Spirituality

Women in the congregation are invited to join in exploring Joyce Rupp's book, *The Cup of Our Life*. Rupp shares how the ordinary cups that we use each day can become sacred vessels that connect us with life and draw us ever closer to God. The cup is a rich symbol for life, with its emptiness and fullness, brokenness and flaws, and all its blessings. Each month, we'll engage in prayer, song, discussion, and other spiritual practices.

Please contact Leanne Benoit at the church:

- for more info:
- to join the afternoon sessions (4th Mon, 1:15 pm – 3:00 pm)
- if you are interested in evening sessions.



First+Met Music

Many thanks to all of those who supported our **Carols in the Candlelight Christmas Pageant *Martin the Cobbler***. So many folks helped provide costuming, props, hospitality, publicity and then there are those who support with their kind words along the way. All of this is so appreciated. One member of the cast, a recent arrival in the city, expressed that this was one of the happiest Christmases of his life as he became part of our community during what might have been a really difficult time in a new city.



**Chris Hushagen
photography**



Notes for your calendar

Celtic Vespers ~ Feb 3 ~ 5:15 pm Held in the Chapel This 45-minute service is based on the liturgy resources of Iona, and includes Gaelic music.

May 6, 3:00 pm *Let the Heavens Ring* –a heritage concert celebrating the 150 years of music-making in the founding congregations of First and Metropolitan. All folks in our music programme will be on deck for this spectacular event, and I hope that YOU, too, will be counted present!

Early July – stay tuned for our biannual **Kathaumixw International Choral concerts**. This event celebrates the joy of music making as heard from guest choirs from around the world. These folks will have been attending the Powell River choral festival and will come to Victoria prior to returning to their home countries. We will be once again looking for billets when they are in our city.

"Jester Jesus" AROUSING YOUR MYSTIC SPIRIT

Jester Jesus

Jesus' sense of humour; Jesus as trickster The value and importance of laughter

"A close reading of the Gospels reveals Jesus not only as a wisdom teacher and activist but as a young rabbi with an infectious, ironic, daring, irresistible sense of humour."

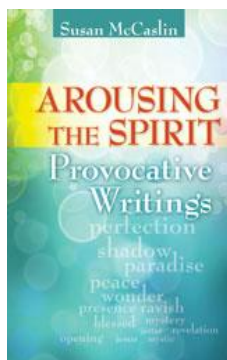
Join author Susan McCaslin for an engaging workshop as we explore Chapter 2 of her book: Jester Jesus.

Sunday, February 19, 1:00-3:00 pm, Doreene MacLeod Room. Cost \$20.

Don't be disappointed, registration is limited to 15 participants.

AROUSING YOUR MYSTIC SPIRIT

by poet and essayist Susan McCaslin



Susan's new book of stimulating essays addresses in our contemporary context: perfectionism, the life beyond death, the evolution of consciousness, war and peace, to sexuality and spirituality.

Informed by her lifelong engagement with mystical traditions, each essay suggests how the mystical traditions at the heart of Christianity and the world's experiential faith traditions enable us to transcend the boundaries of dogma, literalism, and fixed systems of belief to enter the great heart-mind streams of love and compassion.

An Introduction to Meister Eckhart

Meister Eckhart, a 13th C. mystic, taught and preached an insightful, radical way of understanding creation, God, spirituality/creativity, and the world. His beliefs are described in four paths or movements of the human spirit on the journey towards wholeness. Through his approach many people have discovered a meaningful spirituality for the 21st C. and the world we live in. Some have described his way as relevant, hopeful, and an integration of the personal and the cosmic.

A brief workshop on Meister Eckhart's way was offered at EE, though in a very abbreviated form by Sue Clough. In the workshop below at Royal Roads University, Sue will offer an opportunity to expand this understanding and invite participants to deepen their spiritual growth and creativity.

- When? Friday, Mar. 9 (7:30 - 9:30pm)
Saturday, Mar.10 (9am - 4pm)
- Where? Royal Roads University
(Building TBA)
- How? Register with Royal Roads Continuing Education
250-391-2600, ext. 4801
Cost: \$145

For further information or questions, see p. 62 in the Royal Roads calendar or contact Sue Clough at sjmc45@gmail.com



Healing Touch



Do you feel overwhelmed by the challenges in your life? Do your mind and body crave peace and quiet? Consider a RETREAT DAY that includes a free session with the Energy Practitioners of First+Met's Healing Ministry. Hour treatments are offered on the hour between noon and 6:00 pm every Monday afternoon. (Please call if you can't keep your appointment). Sessions include a short meditation. 30 minutes with a Practitioner, and grounding time. Call Susan Walma at 250-361-0964.

Dental Supplies for Our Place



I recently overheard a conversation that gave me an idea. One person said to another that upon a recent dental visit she asked her dentist if he could donate some dental supplies to Our Place. The dentist responded by saying that he had never been asked to donate and indeed he could do that.

So, upon my most recent dental visit, I asked my dentist if he'd be interested in donating some supplies through First+Met Church for Our Place. He always had freebies in the waiting room! The next day, when I returned, I had a box of supplies. My appreciation was strongly made known and I assured him that all the supplies would get to people who need them.

I am wondering what would happen if each one of us made this request to our dentists. Do you think we could fill the Our Place chest and supply all needs for a year or two?



Submitted by: A Anderson

Supplies For Our Place



Our Place The Family at Our Place is in urgent and constant need of the following items for men and women. New Socks! Underwear, gently used sneakers and other shoes, mugs. Personal Hygiene Products razors, toothbrushes, tampons/sanitary napkins, deodorant, towels, soap/shampoo (travel size). These can be dropped off and placed in the Our Place trunk which is located by the elevator outside the Sanctuary.

Life's Challenges

Do you wonder how to support someone who is ill or dying?

Are you angry with God about suffering or loss in your life?

Are you facing challenging times ?

Do you suspect your loved one has dementia?

You are not alone! That is the first thing we want you to know. Your First+Met community is here to support you. Please talk with one of us so we may walk this journey with you:

Leanne Benoit – Minister of Pastoral Care
250-388-5188 ext. 225

Emily MacDonald – Health & Wellness Director
250-388-5188 ext. 233

Linda Mulhall – Spiritual Guide
250-479-8410 or l.mulhall@shaw.ca

Karl Ireland – Counsellor
karl_ireland1@hotmail.com or 778-433-4022

Prayer Connections Team
prayer@firstmetvictoria.com

Healing Touch Team
Susan Walma 250-361-0964

Check our Care Notes in the hallway by the Doreene McLeod Room for print materials such as:

- Finding a Way to Forgive
- What Everyone Should Know About Dementia
- Coping When Someone You Love Is Dying
- Easing the Burden of Stress
- Journeying Through Loneliness
- When the Healing Isn't Happening

"We are not alone, we live in God's world...
In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.
We are not alone. Thanks be to God."

(A New Creed, United Church of Canada, 1968)



Stewardship Committee

I am pleased to report that the 2011 Stewardship Annual Appeal was very successful, due in large part to the **pledges made by 150 Congregants. Increases in pledges came to \$61,290 for a net increase of \$50,169.** Reduced or lost pledges account for the difference. **The average increase was \$701.** Our Goal was a net increase in Regular Givings of \$50,000 over 2011. We had a very positive outcome considering economic strains on individual circumstances. **Total amount pledged was \$291,736 or 56.1% of 2012 budget!**

Our **Annual Appeal will run again next September and October.** Planning is starting now. The value of pledging by a large part of our Congregation cannot be overemphasized. As the 2013 Budget process will start in the fall of 2012, **your help in forecasting givings by pledging in the Thanksgiving period is most important.** About 30% of us pledge now and increasing that percentage this year would be most helpful.

We see challenges in addition to maintaining the Regular Givings at critical levels. The Committee is **providing assistance and support for the "Raise the Roof" Appeal** now underway. The very important issue of maintaining our heritage infrastructure is crucial to ongoing church programs and activities. **Please participate** by raising or donating funds now to ensure the soundness of our Sanctuary, so important to our Vision and Mission.

The Stewardship Committee will also be examining ways to **foster bequests, memorials and special gifts during our 150th Anniversary Year.** We are looking at ways to increase benefits for the church and its congregation in the years to come. **All of us are beneficiaries** of those who have gone before in the founding churches. We have an **obligation to continue their legacy** for generations to come. More about that later!

Thank you for your continued support of efforts to secure financial stability for First Met. Your help is much appreciated. On behalf of the Committee and Assistants, I wish you the very best of everything in 2012. Blessings to you and yours.

Herb Pitts, Chair for Kim Kanstrup and Robin Krause. Assistance is graciously provided by Laura Walsh, Joy Spencer-Barry and Allan Saunders.

Mission & Service Fund



MISSION AND
SERVICE FUND

"AFRICA; Sustainable Agriculture and Community Development

The Surplus People Project (SPP), formed in 1985 in South Africa, supports South Africans working for land, water, and agricultural reform to improve the standard of living in impoverished rural communities.

- The SPP works with farmers on a wide range of projects: making land and resources accessible; building rural organizations and networks; making sure farmers have secure long-term tenure; and supporting initiatives that are ecologically friendly.
- SPP also offers support to tenant farmers, who are vulnerable to eviction and displacement.
- SPP is working to train small-scale farmers in techniques that are financially sustainable and ecologically sound. They are also working with women on leadership development, so women can have more of a voice in making community decisions.

Please support the work of the Surplus People Project by giving to the Mission and Service Fund.

Submitted by: Joyce Thomson

Angel Gift Program

December 29th

A message of thanks -

Each year, many hundreds of people in greater Victoria answer the call to be an angel, to give an ANGEL GIFT to someone at Our Place. Jordan Cooper, Outreach Manager at Our Place, looks after compiling the list of those who will receive gifts and he looks forward each year to playing Santa and distributing the many ANGEL GIFTS. Jordan is perfectly placed to provide donors with feedback and the gratitude expressed by recipients of the gifts. In Jordan's words, here are a few stories from last week.

"There was a fellow that came in for his ANGEL GIFT and was very excited to receive his gift. He said that this year was the first year in 20 years that he had a place of his own. He had bought a small tree so that he would have somewhere to put his ANGEL GIFT until December 25th.

A woman came in and she told me that her gift was not something that she would wear. She was however able to trade it with another family member for a different gift that suited her.

One man was brought to the brink of tears when he received his gift. The wrapping paper had drawings and pictures done by children. He said that he didn't want to open the gift because the wrapping paper meant so much to him.

Every year people want to know who they can thank for the gift. I tell them that there are so many people that buy the gifts it is difficult to thank them. So for everyone that provided a gift for ANGEL GIFTS, I say thank you."

Please share these stories with people in your congregation, your workplace, your family and with friends. Your gifts are very important and they are very much appreciated. Thank you for your gifts and for sharing the Christmas message.

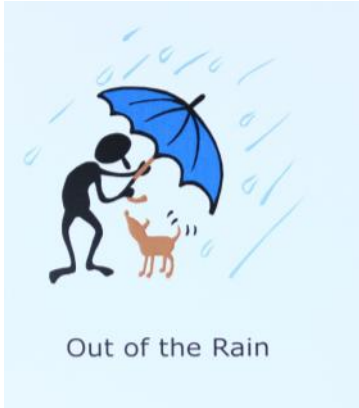
Christmas blessings for the New Year,

*Audrey McLennan
Coordinator, Angel Gift Program
For Our Place*

BE AN ANGEL



Out of The Rain



In our Fellowship Hall kitchen is a prayer:

Serving Others in the Name of Christ

Lord help me to understand that it is only by serving others in the name of Christ, that we find love, peace, and joy in our faith and in our lives. Amen.

Having the privilege of being involved in the Out of the Rain program has afforded us the opportunity to serve, with the grace of God, our homeless youth. First Metropolitan United is fortunate, as an inner city church, to have a vigorous Outreach program, of which OOTR is part. We are one of several shelter sites, one for each night and day of the

week that is overseen by Beacon Community services. December saw an increase in attendance; the Fellowship Hall has a capacity for up to 30 street youths. Thank-you to all our kitchen and food volunteers who responded so well to the increased need. Our street youth very much appreciated the Christmas treats and goodies. Thank you to our custodians for setting up the shelter and to our congregation and staff for all your donations. Your continued support fuels the success of this vital program that serves our clients through to mid April. All continuing donations particularly socks are appreciated and can be dropped off at the church office. For further information or questions please call Bob and Leslie Wilson, Volunteer Coordinators of OOTR @ 250-590-4586 or lslova@shaw.ca. We wish everyone a happy and blessed New Year.

Inner City Dinner

Please make a note on your calendars of the following ICD dates in 2012

February	February 17
March	March 16
April	April 20
May	May 18
June	June 22
July	No dinner
August	No dinner
September	September 21
October	October 19
November	November 16
December	No dinner

The Inner City Dinner ministry continues to meet an important need in our community. Since September our dinners have operated at full capacity - providing 252 sit down dinners and approximately 100 take-away meals each month. We have had a very good volunteer response so far and encourage our volunteers to continue to support this ministry in 2012. Please note the 2012 ICD dates: Jan 13, Feb 17, Mar 16, Apr 20, May 18, June 22, Sept 21, Oct 19 and Nov 16.

Volunteers for the evening shift are asked to please come to the Fellowship Hall at 4:15 pm for orientation and job assignments. To volunteer call Robin 250-472-3381 or email robin.breckon@gmail.com.

Many thanks to all who help this ministry with their gifts of time, talent and treasure.



February is 'Inner City Dinner' Appeal month. It now costs almost \$950 per dinner to feed 252 people in the hall, plus 85-100 take out meals for those who can't get a seat. That works out to about only \$3.00 a person. A very good price for a roast beef dinner with apple pie and ice cream. All the money for the 9 dinners we serve throughout the year comes from the generous donations of our congregation. Please consider helping us continue this very worthwhile cause in any way that you can.

Welcome to Emily MacDonald



Emily has worked in the community for most of her career. For the past 11 years, she was a home care nurse, case manager, manager and clinical leader for the Vancouver Island Health Authority. Most recently, she was the clinical leader at the Victoria Health unit for the Quick Response Team, the Regional Resource for Adults with Disabilities Team and the Wound Care Clinic. Emily has a Master's Degree in Nursing from the University of Victoria.

She has been a member of Pilgrim United Church for the past 10 years where she was chair of the Ministry and Personnel Committee, an alternate representative for Presbytery and a teacher of Godly Play. Over the past several years, Emily has travelled to Haiti three times as a member of a work team that provided care and services at Hope Home, a group home for 25 mentally and physically challenged children and youth.

In her free time, she walks her Labradoodle named Lucy Lu, does silversmithing, kayaks, hikes and camps. She also participates in two book clubs – one that reads theology and one for fun books.

“Greetings to everyone in this bright new year. I feel so blessed to be part of your congregation and one of the staff here at First+Met. I work half time as the Health and Wellness Advocate, (Parish Nurse) and my office hours are Sunday mornings 9 - 1; Mon 1 – 5; Tues 12 – 4; Wed 1 -5 and Fri 1 – 5. On alternate Fridays I facilitate the Health and Wellness Support Group from 10:30 – 12:30, a group for anyone struggling with health or other crises. Newcomers welcome! We meet in the Chapel. My phone number is 250-388-5188 local 233 and my email address is wellness@firstmetvictoria.com Please do not hesitate to call if you have any questions or concerns around health care for you or your family. I look forward to meeting you! Emily MacDonald, RN, MN”

NAVIGATING LIFE'S TRANSITIONS

For those who have experienced a change in life circumstances: divorce, separation, job loss, empty-nesting, retirement, aging, a change in life style.

We are constantly living with change: change of career, change in life style, change in a relationship, divorce, job loss, or moving. “Change” is a shift in the situation. *Transition*, on the other hand, is the process of letting go of the way things used to be and then taking hold of what they have now become. In the time between the “letting go” and “taking hold again” is the chaotic time of transition; a time of sadness, loss, letting go of old roles and identities, learning to live with uncertainty; and eventually it is also a time of opening up to the spaciousness of life, and anticipating new beginnings. We will be working with teachings from various spiritual traditions, as well as the work of Carl Jung, to help move through this phase of uncertainty. Guided meditation and group sharing will be used to assist participants in this journey towards their new identity.

The group will meet for five evenings, for two hours each evening, meeting every two weeks. To assist the group in establishing an open, safe environment, **no new members will be added after the first session.** After the first session, participants will be asked to commit to an additional four sessions.

Sessions are FREE and OPEN TO ALL: Everyone is Welcome!

Dates: Five Wednesdays: March 28, April 11 & 25, May 9 & 23, 2012 **Time:** 7 – 9 pm

Location: First Metropolitan United Church, Doreene McLeod Room

Facilitator: Linda Mulhall MEd.

Register online at: www.firstmetvictoria.com or call the office at 250-388-5188

Further Information: l.mulhall@shaw.ca OR 250-479-8410

Visit my website: www.spiritcall.ca



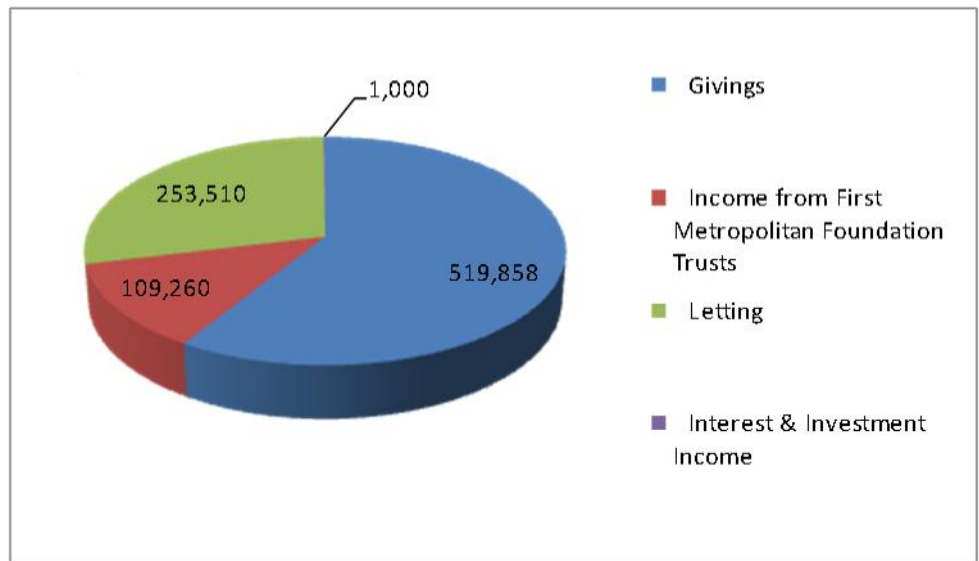
F&A Committee – January 2012 Newsletter Contribution

The F&A Committee received approval for the 2012 Operating and Capital Budgets at the Congregational Meeting held on January 8, 2012.

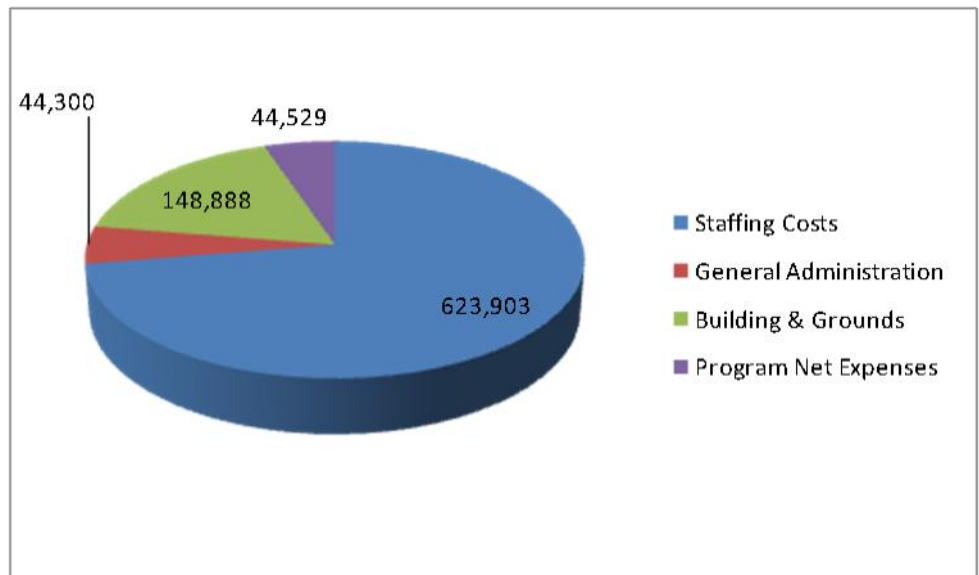
The 2012 Operating Budget forecasts **Revenues of \$883,628** and **Expenses of \$861,620** with the **Surplus of \$22,008** to be transferred to the Congregational Holding Account, a Restricted Fund that is designated as a capital reserve for future capital improvements.

The two charts below provide a breakdown of the 2012 budgeted Revenues and Expenses. Additional detail is contained in the budget documents which can be viewed in the Finance Office during normal Church office hours.

2012 Budgeted Revenue



2012 Budgeted Expenses



Another way for people to make donations to First+Met United

People with "smart phones" such as iPhone and Android phones can scan the QR (Quick Response) box below with their smart phone and make a donation to First+Metropolitan United Church. If you have a smart phone and have the free QR app loaded on to your phone, check it out!!!!



New Live Streaming

11:00 am Worship at First+Met

Some comments from those watching our worship on their computers:



I was thrilled to be able to use the live streaming service today. Thank you and your team SO much for everything that you do at First+Met. I know how hard you all work and people do appreciate it more than you know.

I am spending 7 weeks in Florida and just wanted you to know how great it was to get the live streaming of this morning's service with Martin Brokenleg.

To view the services go to www.firstmetvictoria.com and click on "Events" in the main Menu Bar.

Please be patient re any "bumps" as this is still in the early trial stages.

Comments can be sent to Brian Shields at bshields@islandnet.com.

Call for 2014 Bulletin Photos

Seeking: EXCELLENT QUALITY photos or digital images on CD with high-quality colour printouts.

Purpose: For the 2014 United Church bulletin covers. Images chosen may also be used on the church website or in bulletin marketing ads.

Payment: \$100.00 will be paid for each photograph used. Photo credits will be printed on the bulletin covers.

Submissions: Detach entry form, complete both sides, and mail to:

The United Church of Canada
Bulletin Production, Financial Stewardship
3250 Bloor St. West, Suite 300
Toronto, ON M8X 2Y4

Photocopy the entry form (both sides) as needed to share with church members.



Note: Because of the volume of submissions you will NOT be notified that your submission has been received. All chosen photographers will be notified by January 2013. All photos accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope will be returned in April 2013 after production is concluded.

Epiphany Exploration 2012

Epiphany Explorations 2012 – our tenth anniversary!



Many Thanks for Another Successful Epiphany Explorations conference!

Our tenth annual Epiphany Explorations conference was held January 19 to 23 featuring speakers Marcus Borg and Richard Rohrbaugh, Mary Jo Leddy, Martin Brokenleg, Paul Bramadat, Elizabeth May, Herbert O'Driscoll and our own Tom Attig. Special features of the conference were a performance of *Playback: Reflecting upon the Lives of Immigrants Through Drama* by the Puente Theatre Company and a concert by the Common Cup Company. Once again, participants and presenters alike were impressed with the variety of speakers, the richness of the musical offerings, and the hospitality and organization of the event. This would not happen without the hard work and dedication of all the staff, an army of volunteers and the cooperation and support of the congregation. Thank you to everyone! Thank you also to the outside organizations who contributed in a variety of ways to the success of the event: Fairfield United Church, Executive House Hotel, Best Western Carlton Plaza Hotel, Thrifty Foods, Serious Coffee, First Baptist Church, Times Colonist newspaper, Al Nattress (posthumous donation), McCall Brothers Funeral Directors, City of Victoria, La-Z-Boy Furniture Gallery and MEDChair Victoria.

End of Life Ethics—Conversations on Physician-Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia

Join Tom Attig for two workshops on physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia.

We will focus on the ethics of suicide among the terminally ill or seriously afflicted:

- The commandment against killing and traditional Christian thinking that some killing is morally permissible, e.g., in just war or self-defense
- The legality of suicide
- Respect for personal autonomy
- Whether suicide could be an act of self-defense
- The important contrast between assisted-suicide and euthanasia

Workshop dates to be announced in early spring – watch the website and bulletin notices for more details.

Thomas Attig is author of *The Heart of Grief: Death and the Search for Lasting Love*, *How We Grieve: Relearning the World*, and numerous articles on grief and loss, care of the dying, suicide intervention, the ethics of interactions with the dying, and the nature of applied philosophy. He has shared his expertise in North American, Japan, England, Australia, Israel, and Germany.

Prayer Requests



Do you ever wonder who would be praying for you if you made a prayer request to First†Met's Prayer Connections Team? It has been awhile since I published our group membership list, so I thought I would let you know who our current members are - all busily praying away in their own homes for the needs of the congregation. In alphabetical order (no favourites!) we are: Ted Bristow, Laura Butler, David Chamberlin, Gillian Chamberlin, Janet Harper, Nancy Leal, Phyllis Pond, Helen Sanderson, Anne Sikstrom, Bob Wilson, and Leslie Wilson. Our staff partners are Leanne Benoit and Emily MacDonald.

PRIVACY: Prayer Connections Team members and our staff partners all treat your name and information as confidential. However, if for any reason you ever wanted a prayer request to be prayed for by the prayer team only, without the information being passed on to our staff partners, please make that clear in your written or email prayer request. Likewise, if you are in touch with a staff partner over a difficult situation, they may ask you if you would like to be prayed for by the Prayer Connections Team. If yes, Leanne or Ann would pass your name on to the prayer team. If no, they would keep your information confidential, to themselves only. Also, for prayer requests to the Prayer Connections Team, the requester's name is optional, or a first name only may be given, so if you don't feel comfortable with anyone knowing your situation, you would be prayed for anonymously. God knows who you are! We welcome all requests - give us a try. We pray each request for a month.

More Events

Knitting Group

Meeting in Room 200
From 6:30 pm until 8:30 pm



We have wool, needles, patterns, fun, and fellowship to share.

Please join us if you are interested!

**Feb 14, & Mar 13 ~ Room 119
every 2nd Tue of the month.**

Joan Mickelson 250-385-4033

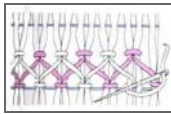
Listening Heart

An exploration of a variety of meditation practices from Christian, Buddhist, Jewish, Sufi and First Nations traditions, these sessions are held in the Chapel at 1:30 pm on Mondays. No previous experience is necessary. For more information, please contact the facilitator, Linda, at 250-479-8410.

First and Third Mondays in the Chapel

Feb 6, 20 & Mar 5, 19

Smocking Craft Group



Every 2nd and 4th Monday of the Month

Room 102

9:30 am to 11:30 am

Feb 13 & 27 & Mar 12, 26

Mark Your Calendars!!

Giant Book Sale

Feb 18—Fellowship Hall

10 am—2:00 pm

Feb 19— coffee hour after the 11 am service

Greatly Reduced Prices!

\$1, to \$5

Calendars are free when you buy a book

Books and Calendars ~

Donated from Mayfair—Hallmark Cards



Actimets Couples Club

will meet at the

The Lakes Restaurant

at the Howard Johnson Hotel, Elk Lake.

Our next regular meetings will be

Feb 17/no meetings in Mar & May

Apr 20 and June 15

at 12 noon

Check your bulletins for more information.

Taize Services

Fri., Feb 17, Mar 16

Christ Church Cathedral in the Jerusalem Chapel

6-7 pm

Sponsored by the
Downtown Church's
Association.



**The United Church Observer magazine at
11 issues per year for \$20 is nothing short
of a GREAT DEAL!**

Tai Chi

Mondays & Wednesdays

12 Noon Fellowship Hall

Newcomers Welcome!



Sunday, March 18th

The World Comes to Victoria!!



Gathering in the Sanctuary
starts at 10:45 am

A Celebration of Cultural Diversity

In recognition of
the International Day
for the Elimination
of Racial Discrimination



Featuring
Cultural Groups
Interfaith Guests
Ethnic food
for lunch



Thanks to the
Inter~Cultural
Association of
Greater Victoria
for their
assistance!



Join the Victoria Storytellers Guild and Arbutus Sings & Children's Choir for World Storytelling Day

A celebration of Trees
in story & song

Family Event 2 – 3 pm
Evening Event – 7 pm

