



BROADVIEW COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

STEEPLE NEWS

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Steeple News
Volume 2: Issue 8
December 2006
Edited by Mary Mackenzie

Although this month's Steeple News pastoral reflection is a rerun from several years ago, several had told me they enjoyed reading it, so I thought I'd run it again. I believe that it still communicates a sense of what it feels like to make my rounds as a pastor during the Advent season.

SNOWY WINTER MUSINGS

Pastor Dan Stern

As of this late November writing, twice by the light of early morning stars, I've seen to my surprised delight that in the night, snow had fallen. Twice I've remembered what it feels like to be a contented, excitable kid! When that clean, white stuff falls in Seattle, it is so beautiful, laying heavy on all shapes of bushes and sizes of trees. When I go out front to get the paper, I notice that the Heavenly Bamboo are weighed down with snow, to the point of touching the ground. "Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down...with the worries of this life, so that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap," says Jesus in Luke 21:34. This particular day's surprises, however, do not feel like a trap at all. They come to me in waves, one upon the other, throughout the day.

Since church is only a couple blocks away, the snow is hardly an inconvenience at all; I think to myself, I can make all of today's pastoral home visits by foot. It feels like an adventure, time-travel back to the early 20th century, perhaps, before cars were commonplace, when neighbors mattered to each other.

After coffee and chores and a quick read of the paper, it's become lighter outside and time to walk Icy (my dog) - and Sam to the bus stop. I treat myself to the scenic, more circuitous route back through the cemetery, unleashing Icy briefly to riotous delight. She scoops up snow on her snout, runs at me playfully; she seems to be laughing. True to her namesake, Icy ignores the balls of ice that quickly form between furry paws.

I had planned, as is my Friday custom, to spend the better part of the day writing, but I get my share of interruptions - ministry, I've always been told, is

primarily ABOUT the interruptions! Sung Chen, the Taiwanese English student calls, needing assistance with his book review of Jack London's *The Call of the Wild*. It is hardly a chore for me; the book was one of my childhood favorites. The seventh and final chapter is the clincher. The sled dog Buck has gradually become accustomed to life with the wolf pack. When his gold-mining human friend John Thornton and fellow sled dogs get murdered, Buck, both violently angry and grief-stricken, enters the wild once and for all. I suggest that the call of the wild is a call to be who you are at your fullest and best. I look down to where Icy is sleeping peacefully at my feet, balls of ice having melted into puddles on the hardwood floor. I smile -thinking to myself that today may really be about the call of the tame to go back to sleep!

I write some more. Someone else calls whose brother is dying back East. He's never been close to this brother, in fact, he considers him a terrible scoundrel - Abel judging Cain. Still he wonders whether he should go, and whether he should forgive him. He already knows that I think he should if he can, for his own sake. I know he expects and wants me to say that. I do. He thanks me for saying it; he calls his brother; a long overdue reconciliation takes place.

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The day is fast waning, and I realize, as I often do by mid-afternoon on Fridays, that I'm hungry, I've not had a proper lunch, my sermon has a long way yet to go, and I've not visited everyone I'd hoped to this week. A newly-attending individual has accepted my offer to meet with him at a nearby coffee shop. I make a sandwich before stepping out. As I hurriedly eat it, I re-read next Sunday's scripture passages, the ones for the First Sunday of Advent. Luke 21:25-36 stands out. "Signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations...the roaring of the sea and the waves, and the powers of the heavens shaken. Now when these things take place, stand up, raise your heads, your redemption is drawing near."

I choose to interpret the "signs in the stars" and the "roaring of the waves" as good news; I want to stand up, raise my head in hope. Maybe with so much "distress among the nations" - I feel I must. There is so much bad news running rampant, both near and far. Even in our own community, many are sick or suffering just now, in my own household, nasty colds seem to be brewing. I know one has to be careful about hope, not letting it degenerate into mere wishful thinking. One has to be vigilant, not myopic. And yet on days like this one, I'm reminded that my life is good beyond all deserving. My goose-bump-making memories of warm fires and winter snows have spilled into the potential for good that is in the present moment. Before dark, the one I love will come home to me. Thanks be to our God.

TO YOUR CREDIT

Thank you for your support of the ministry of Broadview Community United Church of Christ! As the end of the year approaches, here are some contribution thoughts.

1. The Internal Revenue Service requires that for a contribution to be credited in 2006, it must be received in 2006; "received" means either delivered to the church, or postmarked, by Dec. 31.
2. I am glad to check the balance on your pledge so you can be sure it is fulfilled completely.
3. You can also contribute stock: this might be a tax benefit to you, and Broadview can easily accept stock donations.

For information on any of these or other questions you may have, please call me at 206-363-8060, or email david.d.anderson@comcast.net.

Thank you for your contributions, and for your help!

David Anderson
Bookkeeper

GEORGE CARLIN'S VIEWS ON AGING

Submitted By: Patti Kujac

Do you realize that the only time in our lives when we like to get old is when we're kids? If you're less than 10 years old, you're so excited about aging that you think in fractions.

"How old are you?" "I'm four **and a half!**" You're never thirty-six and a half. You're four and a half, going on five! That's the key.

You get into your teens, now they can't hold you back. You jump to the next number, or even a few ahead.

"How old are you?" "I'm **gonna be 16!**" You could be 13, but hey, you're gonna be 16! And then the greatest day of your life . . . you **become 21**. Even the words sound like a ceremony . **YOU BECOME 21. YESSSS!!!**

But then you **turn 30**. Oooohh, what happened there? Makes you sound like bad milk! He **TURNE**D; we had to throw him out. There's no fun now, you're Just a sour-dumpling. What's wrong? What's changed?

You **BECOME 21**, you **TUR**N 30, then you're **PUSHING 40**. Whoa! Put on the brakes, it's all slipping away. Before you know it, you **REACH 50** and your dreams are gone.

But wait!!! You **MAKE it** to 60. You didn't think you would!

So you **BECOME 21**, **TUR**N 30, **PUSH 40**, **REACH 50** and **MAKE it** to 60.

You've built up so much speed that you **HIT 70!** After that it's a day-by-day thing; you **HIT** Wednesday!

You **get into** your 80's and every day is a complete cycle; you **HIT** lunch; you **TURN 4:30**; you **REACH** bedtime. And it doesn't end there. Into the 90s, you start going backwards; "I **Was JUST 92**."

Then a strange thing happens. If you make it over 100, you become a little kid again. "I'm 100 and a half!" May you all make it to a healthy 100 and a half!!

HOLIDAY GREEN TIPS

Low-Impact Holiday Shopping

December 2005

Read Greentips online at

http://ucsaction.org/ct/Ad_Irv71umvT/

In the frenzy of holiday shopping, it's easy to neglect the environmental impact of your purchases, but Mother Nature doesn't have to be left off your gift list. Here are some thoughtful gifts that are environmentally friendly as well.

Environmental news delivered right to your desktop! The Union of Concerned Scientists has launched an online service that will alert you to important environmental research and legislation.

It's easy and free. For more details on the UCS RSS feed go to http://ucsaction.org/ct/A1_Irv71umvY/.

For food and wine lovers:

* Cooking or serving materials made from recycled glass or bamboo (a fast-growing grass).

* A selection of organic wines (available online and at many liquor and natural food stores).

* Membership in a local Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm. The recipient will receive a bounty of sustainably grown produce throughout the summer and fall.

For outdoors enthusiasts:

* Gift certificates for low-impact outdoor adventures such as rafting or canoeing trips.

* Membership to one or more state parks, or a National Parks Pass. The National Parks Pass, administered by the National Park Foundation, covers the entry fee to many national parks and monuments.

* Fleece outerwear (jackets, gloves, hats, scarves) made from post-consumer recycled plastic.

For gardeners:

* A selection of seeds for heirloom and native (non-invasive) plants. Heirloom fruits and vegetables are grown from seeds passed down from generation to generation, helping to preserve genetic diversity. Native plants are adapted for the local climate and therefore require less water, fertilizer, pesticide, and maintenance than exotic varieties.

* Books on environmentally friendly gardening and landscaping techniques.

For new homeowners:

* An energy efficiency gift basket including weather stripping, a water heater blanket, a programmable thermostat, and compact fluorescent light bulbs.

* A home energy audit to be performed by the local utility.

For gadget lovers:

* Rechargeable batteries (available in most hardware stores).

* Wind-up or solar-powered battery chargers for laptops and cell phones.

For all the other people on your shopping list, consider gifts that are locally made, durable, made from recycled or recyclable materials, or use minimal packaging. Happy holidays from all of us at the Union of Concerned Scientists!

For more information:

Organic Consumers Association--Organic Wine

http://ucsaction.org/ct/7_Irv71umvQ/

LocalHarvest--Community Supported Agriculture

http://ucsaction.org/ct/Ap_Irv71umvG/

National Park Foundation

http://ucsaction.org/ct/L7_Irv71umvl/

Seed Savers Exchange

http://ucsaction.org/ct/M1_Irv71umvF/

Native Seeds/SEARCH

http://ucsaction.org/ct/1_Irv71umvp/

National Green Pages

http://ucsaction.org/ct/L1_Irv71umv9/

If you received this message from a friend, you can sign up for the Union of Concerned Scientists

http://ucsaction.org/ucsaction/join.html?r=9p_Irv71w_mvME&

SHAREHOUSE

December

Laundry Detergent and disposable diapers

January

Toothbrushes and toothpaste

LETTER FROM LIZZIE BAKER

Dear Broadview Community,

I returned Saturday the 28th, from my week long adventure in Little Farms Louisiana.

I was really touched by the people who live in the city of New Orleans-- by their spirit and their powerful belief in community making a difference. On our last working day we all gutted a house for Mary and her daughter Lizzie. They came all the way from the other side of Lake Ponchartraine to bring us sandwiches, chips, soda and water. They really wanted us to know how much they appreciated our help. She cried with us as she said good bye. As we worked strangers came up to us to thank us for being there.

I have more stories to tell and pictures to show. Thank you so much for all of your contributions. You were truly there with me.

Love from Lizzie Baker

NEWS FROM GARY LAW AND DAN CLARK

News from Gary Law and Dan Clark in Chattanooga, TN:

Well, we do have some good news, Dan's folks have purchased a parcel of land (just under 30 acres) it is set to close before the end of this month! If all goes well we should be moved into a manufactured home there by Feb. or March at the latest. It is a beautiful spot, we have been out there several times now walking the property. It is about 30 miles out of Chattanooga in an area that is growing. We have actually met a couple of gay folks that live near there; already it feels like it will be a good move.

HOW TO STAY YOUNG

Submitted by Patti Kujac

1. Throw out nonessential numbers. This includes age, weight and height. Let the doctors worry about them. That is why you pay "them."
2. Keep only cheerful friends. The grouches pull you down.
3. Keep learning. Learn more about the computer, crafts, gardening, whatever. Never let the brain idle. "An idle mind is the devil's workshop." And the devil's name is Alzheimer's.
4. Enjoy the simple things.
5. Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you gasp for breath.
6. The tears happen. Endure, grieve, and move on. The only person, who is with us our entire life, is ourselves. Be ALIVE while you are alive.
7. Surround yourself with what you love, whether it's

family, pets, keepsakes, music, plants, hobbies, whatever. Your home is your refuge.

8. Cherish your health: If it is good, preserve it. If it is unstable, improve it. If it is beyond what you can improve, get help.

9. Don't take guilt trips. Take a trip to the mall, even to the next county; to a foreign country but NOT to where the guilt is.

10. Tell the people you love that you love them, at every opportunity.

THIS SEASON...ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, EPIPHANY

From Seasons of the Spirit: Congregational Life

This "season" is actually three seasons bound in one. *Advent*, whose name derives from the Latin word for "coming," offers preparation for God's coming that blends the news of Jesus' coming into the world with the expectation of God's coming realm. *Christmas* is not just a day but a season that celebrates God's presence among us in Jesus. *Epiphany*, a word from the Greek for "revealing," explores how this coming is not privately held, but revealed in (and by) the whole of life and creation.

As might be expected from such a combining of times and themes, the texts designated for this season move us in a variety of directions. Prophetic words that bring both the challenge and promise of new life fill the opening weeks. What comes to be revealed is not only the good news of Jesus' coming, but also our call, response, and commission, as the readings move us into the promise and vocation of ourselves becoming the ones – individually and in community – through whom God continues to reveal Christ in the world.

READINGS

December 3, 2006

First Sunday of Advent
The Days Are Coming
Jer 33:14-16; Ps 25:1-10
1 Thess 3:9-13;

December 10, 2006

Second Sunday of Advent
And You, Child
Mal 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79 (As a canticle)
Phil 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6

December 17, 2006

Third Sunday of Advent
 What Should We Do?
 Zeph 3:14-20; Isa 12:2-6 (As a canticle)
 Phil 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18

December 24, 2006

Fourth Sunday of Advent
 Surprising Joy
 Mic 5:2-5a; Luke 1:47-55 (As a canticle)
 Heb 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)

Christmas Eve

Isa 9:2-7; Ps 96
 Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)

December 31, 2006

First Sunday after Christmas
 Growing in Wisdom
 1 Sam 2:18-20, 26; Ps 148
 Col 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52

Reading for Epiphany may also be read:

Isa 60:1-6; Ps 72:1-7, 10-14
 Eph 3:1-12; Matt 2:1-12

January 7, 2007

First Sunday after Epiphany
 Living Waters
 Isa 43:1-7; Ps 29
 Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

January 14, 2007

Second Sunday after Epiphany
 Revealing Love
 Isa 62:1-5; Ps 36:5-10
 1 Cor 12:1-11; John 2:1-11

BIRTHDAY LIST**December**

Thea Ward	12/3
Tom Ward	12/3
Chris Foss	12/8
Sally Middendorf	12/10
Lin Takahashi	12/11
Tracy Studyvin	12/13
Bill Norton	12/15
Lois Selmar	12/15
Giovanni English	12/20
Dan Stern	12/29

January

Bob Squaglia	1/2
Maureen Tverberg	1/10
Ruth Hylander	1/10
Craig Swanson	1/12
Britney English	1/20

FAITH TRUST INSTITUTE**Letter from Rev. Kathryn Jans,
Executive Director**

Dear Rev. Stern,

Together, we are challenging congregations and denominations to take an active stand on behalf of the women, men, and children who are victimized daily by violence.

This faithful gift of \$300 from Broadview Community United Church of Christ will help us continue to move forward toward ending violence in our families and our communities. With your gift we will be able to:

- Provide women's shelters with survivor resources on religious issues and domestic violence
- Provide expertise in developing denominational policies addressing and preventing sexual abuse by clergy
- Conduct training for clergy and lay leaders to address the religious and cultural issues related to domestic violence, sexual violence and child abuse

You will receive FaithTrust Institute's newsletter, *Working Together*, throughout the next year, providing periodic updates on the programs and multimedia resources of FaithTrust Institute. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Our prayers are with you in your ministry as we are comforted to know yours are with us. Again, thank you for your continued support and for being part of this important work.

Gratefully,

Rev. Kathryn Jans
 Executive Director

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United Church of Christ

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EVENTS AT BROADVIEW COMMUNITY UCC

This Friday, The Broadview at the Movies presents: *The Ground Truth: After the Killing Ends*

December 8, 2006 at 7:30pm. This movie tells the story of ten soldiers as they go through the recruitment process, join the military, train and serve in Iraq and return home. The film documents the psychological, physical, and social fallout of combat.

Sunday, Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Service at 8pm, this year Bethel Ethiopian Church of Seattle has been invited to join us in worship. Choral music with an African accent will complement our singing of traditional carols and lighting of candles.

The Church of Mary Magdalene, an Ecumenical Ministry with Homeless Women needs our help to make the holiday season joyful for the women and children of Seattle that call the streets their home. We

can help provide new shoes to be given to homeless women on your behalf. These shoes will meet one of the greatest needs these women have. Homeless persons are on their feet more than any other group of people. Your gifts will serve as a reminder that they are not on the streets alone, but have people that care about them and their struggles.

Gift tags will be on Broadview Community UCC's Christmas Tree. Tags request a \$15 donation to the Church of Mary Magdalene so a gift certificate can be bought by the church on your behalf. (Please make checks out directly to "The Church of Mary Magdalene".

We need your donations in to BCUCC by December 14th, as The Church of Mary Magdalene's Christmas party is on December 16th. If you have questions please contact Christy Qualin or in the church office Mary Mackenzie.

