



BROADVIEW COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

STEEPLE NEWS

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Steeple News
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Edited by Mary Mackenzie

“Teach me your patient ways, O Lord. It is for you that I wait.” – Psalm 25:5

BABY MAYBES

*with inspirational thanks to Andrew Hoksima
by Dan Stern*

Advent is, and has in fact always been, a season of deep darkness. Granted, it's a season that looks toward the light, but given the wintertime disappearance of the sun, something more is required of us every single morning. Some argue that it would be better if we just slept in rather than waking up in the dark – that that would be more in keeping with the seasonal rhythms. But most of us adjust to the rhythms of other demands: getting kids ready for school, going to work or seeing a spouse off, taking one's pills, getting to church on time.

Not all of us feel all that hopeful during this season. Some of us, in fact, find ourselves feeling rather depressed. It's not surprising. Advent is about longing, about aching, about wanting change. It is, in other words, about as-of-yet UNfulfilled desire. Advent has been called *the ritual winter of our darkest desire*. So it's NOT surprising, it's not even inappropriate that during this season, our envious and jealous, our cranky & crabby, our sad & lonely, our weary & impatient sides are often at their peak. And with the contrasting glitter and oozing sweetness getting thicker by the minute, we so want to get outside of our small and petty selves.

Wanting to feel and to be better, we do certain ritual and cyclical things. The more active among us take on tasks associated with the early part of the season – maybe we dig up begonias and put them in the garage, or may put gravel out on the sidewalk after an early snow. As if trying to woo the sun back as days grow shorter and nights colder, we bring greens inside, preparing wreathes and Christmas trees. We get out buried boxes of dusty decorations; Dennis hauls in a beautiful tree for us, Kay hangs the Advent wreathes in the narthex, Jerry prepares the altar.

Thank God for routine rituals and familiar carols! Most of the time, we are comforted in the doing of beautifully repetitive predictable things.

But there's a significant UNpredictable dimension to Advent as well. Now is a season set aside to watch for someone, something great, we don't even know exactly who or what or when, to WAIT for it, to expect it, to prepare for it, and to awaken, in so doing, a new birth of hope. Tony and Maria's song in *West Side Story* captures the humming childlike excited expectancy of this side of Advent perfectly: “Who knows, it's only just out of reach, down the block on a beach, maybe tonight... Something's coming, I don't know what it is, but it is gonna be great.” More predictable ritual dimensions of the season offer us comfort. But it's good to also be alert to the possibility of entering unknown territory. We're venturing out toward some adventurous place of surprise and delight too. We can't yet see it, we don't know when, it may be a long, hard wait, yet... the air is humming; something great IS coming.

Advent is a time to engage in a good kind of waiting, a paradoxical kind. On the one hand, we're told to be alert, to stay awake, to be prepared. But we're also told it's a time to slow down, to dream, to go inward. Advent both expects good gifts to come to us AND isn't supposed to know in exactly what form they will come. MAYBE goodness will come about in our dreams, while we are sleeping. MAYBE at wide-awake midnight watch. Maybe this, maybe that.

Continued on pg. 2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PG. #
Baby Maybes	1-2
A Tip To Warm Your Hearth	2-3
Update and Adieu	3
From Vernon Work's Daughter, Linda Hanson	3
'Tis the Season of Giving	4
Faith Formation!	4
Calendars	4
Readings December/January	5
Birthday List December/January	5
A Ritual to Read to Each Other	5

Continued from pg. 1

As we enter the season of Advent, I find myself hoping against hope that the things I believe in most will turn out to be true. Could it be that God WILL make things right again in this, the land of our fondest hopes and dreams? Could it be that the Messiah really HAS come to earth, our global village, and that God is already showing us the way to peace and good will for all? In spite of everything to the contrary that each one of us so often observes and experiences, could all the good that is promised by the prophets of old still be true? MAYBE. Maybe it's all true. And... maybe it's not.

Notice that I'm not clinging to any dead certainties here. Desperately clinging to dead certainties doesn't work all that well. The language of absolute certainty disappoints people. Sure, you can say that Jesus is the answer, but what is the question? It's not that any of us want more mere UNcertainty or in our lives. But rather than absolutes, I find that I prefer ever-reappearing possibilities. Baby maybes, I call them. Hope springing eternal from baby maybes.

In Jesus' day, it was the same: "MAYBE our people will no longer be under the oppression of the Caesars. MAYBE the Chosen One will spend his life with the sinners and the outcasts. Maybe people will be healed. Maybe the poor will be fed. Maybe from now on, all will be treated and loved as equals. Maybe peace will reign and wars will cease. This is the language – and Advent is the season – of possibility. Maybe... Word will become flesh. Maybe God will become human, just like us. Maybe God has entered into this world in the form of a powerless infant (maybe BABIES are the way!) This is the language – And Advent is the season – of Incarnation. Maybe... the dead will rise again. Maybe the old will become new. This is the language – and Advent is one of the seasons – of Resurrection. Maybe... God will be revealed in the beggar, the prostitute, or even the (newly-elected) politician. This is the language – and Advent is the season – of the unexpected."

In our longings, in our baby maybes, we are closer to holiness than we realize. The longing itself is holy, because in essence, all our longings are longings for the smiling presence of a patient forgiving God. "Teach us your patient ways, O Lord. It is for you that we wait."

"In the midst of everything happening in this world, Christians still claim possibility, incarnation, resurrection, and the unexpected. Even now, in late 2007, we still claim Advent."

A TIP TO WARM YOUR HEARTH

October 2007

Read Greentips online at

http://ucsaction.org/ct/M1_Irv71cS10/

With fall in the air, it's time to ensure your home is properly insulated. Insulation prevents heat from leaking out of your home in winter and into your home in summer, making it more comfortable year-round and reducing your energy consumption, global warming pollution, and heating and air conditioning costs.

The many options on the market today include fiberglass rolls, spray foam, rigid foam, and loose-fill cellulose made from old newspapers. To determine the best fit for your needs, consider these factors:

- * R-value. This number represents an insulation's ability to resist heat; the higher the R-value, the more effective the insulation. The U.S. Department of Energy recommends specific R-values for different areas of your home, based on where you live and what heating fuel you use (see the related links). If space is limited, choose the option with the highest R-value for the given thickness you need.
- * Target spaces. Attics and cathedral ceilings are great places to start to get the most bang for your insulation bucks. Next in line should be walls, floors, crawl spaces, and basements.
- * Raw materials. Insulation made from non-petroleum resources, with a high recycled content, requires less energy to process, reduces waste, and uses fewer natural resources. Bear in mind, however, that the environmental impact of insulation manufacturing pales in comparison with the long-term reductions in pollution and energy use you can achieve by choosing any type of insulation that has a higher R-value.

* Installation. Foam insulation has traditionally been sprayed onto walls using chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) or hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs)--chlorine-based chemicals that deplete the ozone layer. But it is now possible to apply foam insulation using chlorine-free agents such as hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), carbon dioxide (CO₂), and even water. If airborne dust or fibers from insulating materials are a concern during insulation, choose products covered in a protective wrap.

Continued on pg. 3

Continued from pg. 2

* Disposal. In addition to choosing insulation with a high recycled content, consider whether it can be recycled at the end of its useful life. For example, some types of insulation can be chopped into smaller pieces and used as loose-fill insulation.

If you are hiring a contractor to install new insulation, have the old material recycled if possible.

The most important factor in your purchasing decision should be the insulation's R-value; use the other criteria to narrow your options. Choosing the most effective insulator that fits within your budget is the best way to minimize your contribution to global warming while keeping you warm and cozy.

Related Links

BuildingGreen.com--Summary of Environmental and Health Impacts http://ucsaction.org/ct/Nd_Irv71cS1Y/

BuildingGreen.com--Insulation materials: Environmental Comparisons http://ucsaction.org/ct/N1_Irv71cS1R/

U.S. Department of Energy—Insulation http://ucsaction.org/ct/M7_Irv71cS1P/

FROM: *Choosing hope over despair make us human* by Anthony B. Robinson

John F. Kennedy was once asked what he would do today if he knew the world were going to end tomorrow. He said that he thought he would plant a tree. At times, hope appears nearly irrational. Even then, and especially now, hope is something else. It is a thing of beauty.

UPDATE AND ADIEU

It's been months now since we've been active at Broadview church, but we do not want to simply disappear, so Dan suggested we share our story. These past several months were very full, as summer and fall so very often are for us. Some of you know that we have explored "island living" off and on for several years. In June we renewed our dreaming and very quickly found a small house on Lopez Island that seemed possible...simply put, we made an offer and plunged into the research process during the inspection phase, and have now renewed another "long-term relationship" with our mortgage banker with the purchase closing in August. We took our boat up in September.

Since then, we have been spending every other weekend on the island—moving in, getting to know our neighbors and that very special place in new ways. On Seattle

weekends we have been paring down, clearing out, and cleaning up. While we are in transition now, the goal for next Spring is weekends on Lopez, renting our house, while living in the studio four days a week when we're in town for work. We have made a leap without mapping all the details or nailing down all the implications, though we have counted the cost in many different ways and on different levels. It all feels right, though the road's been quite bumpy at times and we expect it will continue to be so, here and there.

We're hoping to find a church/worshipping community on the island. There are several, of which two or three seem possible. The move to Lopez makes our move to another faith community very specific and concrete, as we know our choices there--the time is right, and the weekend choices are there before us.

There are lots of ways to live out our life in community--spirit focus, values and worship rituals are important to us and always will be. We are uncertain as to how exactly these will take shape on Lopez, but we are confident they will. We've talked with some of you, but to those with whom we've not spoken directly, we'd like to acknowledge our love and appreciation for BCUCC, and thank the community for all you have been and will faithfully seek to be in the future.

Peace be with you all.
Scott Pinegar & Mo Pomietto

FROM VERNON WORK'S DAUGHTER, LINDA HANSON:

I wanted to let you know that Dad has moved to Daystar Retirement and Assisted living apartments about a mile from my house. He seems to be making a good adjustment. It is so helpful having him close by. He has been going to bible study there. They will drive him to nearby church services also. He is eating three nutritious meals a day and has gained 7 pounds in two weeks. Previously he was losing about 2 pounds a week. He is in good spirits and the enjoys the other tenants and staff. We thank you for the love, care and support you have offered the family through the years. love, Linda

Vernon Work's new address (near daughter, Linda):
Daystar Retirement Village
2615 SW Barton St.
Apt. 4-110
Seattle, WA 98126
Same Phone: 206-362-4290

'TIS THE SEASON OF GIVING, SO...

--**Did you remember to get your 2008 PLEDGE in to your church?** Letting us know the intended amount you can give makes our BCUCC mission- and budget preparation- possible. Please phone or write in your 2008 pledge right away!

--**Scarves, gloves, hats, socks for the homeless** are needed this week too! The youth will be distributing them in Pioneer Square on the first Sunday of Advent.

--**Bethel Ethiopian Church needs financial help with their refugee resettlement efforts!** Please make out a check during Advent/Christmastime to Broadview, designating that it is for ETHIOPIAN REFUGEES.

--Ornaments on the 'tree' in front of the sanctuary are for **\$15 gift shoes for homeless women of the Church of Mary Magdeline.**

--Give to Sharehouse – December: Laundry detergent and disposable diapers; January: Toothbrushes and toothpaste

--**Volunteer!**

For example: at Greenwood Food Bank

-Adopt a local family for holiday meal or give a basket.
-Groups or individuals are always welcome to come during food bank hours and wrap presents, sort food and work on the line distributing food.

Call Christine De Witt at 206-782-6731 to volunteer

FAITH FORMATION!

We are very happy to have Andy Studyvin and Taylor Elder participating in this season's joint UCC Faith Formation group (Confirmation Class). EllenAnn Chiddix and Pastor Dan are the Broadview team leading the program along with Pastors Deanna Murray of Prospect UCC and Cathy Barker of Magnolia UCC.

Next Sunday, Dec. 2, First Sunday at Pioneer Square. EllenAnn is coordinating for Broadview.

Sunday, Dec. 9 Spiral of Light Service, 5 - 6:00 p.m. at Prospect. Our Confirmation youth are to be present- Pastor Deanna leading.

Sunday, Dec. 16 Labyrinth Walk at Magnolia

UCC, 4 - 6 pm. Pastor Cathy coordinating.

(For the upcoming Sunday mornings during Advent at Broadview—(next four Sundays before Christmas)—we hope to have Andy and Taylor participating in morning worship, doing readings, maybe singing with the choir, being in the pageant, etc..)

January 6, First Sunday, location TBA

January 13, 4 - 6 pm we meet at Prospect

January 19-21, Confirmation Overnight Retreat— Seattle location to be announced. One night overnight, either Saturday or Sunday. We will let you know more of the details soon.

Jan. 27 4 - 6 pm, we meet at Broadview.

ADVENT CALENDAR

ADVENT 1: Prophets of Peace

ADVENT 2: Dare to Hope

ADVENT 3: Children's Christmas Pageant

ADVENT 4: Signs of God's Love

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

--**Women's Fellowship Luncheon** in the Fellowship Hall, Thursday, December 6 @ 11am

--You can help make **Christmas gift wreathes** with Jane's garden club at the church Tuesday, December 11 @ 7pm.

--**Annual Children's Christmas Pageant** Sunday, December 16th during worship.

--**Christmas Eve Service** Monday, December 24 @ 8pm.

CHECK OUT...

the great article in *The Enterprise* (Shoreline Nov. 23 edition – also posted at BCUCC) "Utter-ly Poetic: Shoreline Resident Uses Humor, Poetry in Dealing with Cancer". (Fred and Nancy Utter are former BCUCC members.)

READINGS DECEMBER 2007 & JANUARY 2008

December 2, 2007

First Sunday of Advent

Prophets of Peace

Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalm 122

Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:36-44

December 9, 2007

Second Sunday of Advent

Dare to Hope

Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12

December 16, 2007

Third Sunday of Advent

God Comes to Save

Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:5-10

James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11

December 23, 2007

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Signs of God's Love

Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25

December 30, 2007

First Sunday after Christmas

Flight to Egypt

Isaiah 63:7-9; Psalm 148

Hebrews 2:10-18; Matthew 2:13-23

January 6, 2008

Epiphany

Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12

January 13, 2008

The Baptism of Christ

Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29

Acts 10:34-43; Matthew 3:13-17

January 20, 2008

Second Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-11

1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42

January 27, 2008

Third Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 9:1-4; Psalm 27:1, 4-9

1 Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-23

BIRTHDAY LIST DECEMBER & JANUARY

December

Thea Ward	12/5
Tom Ward	12/5
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
Christie Dickerson	12/25
Dan Stern	12/29

January

Bob Squaglia	1/2
Maureen Tverberg	1/10
Ruth Hylander	1/10
Craig Swanson	1/12
David Ladwig	1/17
Brittany English	1/20

"A Ritual to Read to Each Other" by William Stafford

If you don't know the kind of person I am,
and I don't know the kind of person you are,
a pattern that others made may prevail in the world
and following the wrong god home we may miss our star.

For there is many a small betrayal in the mind,
a shrug that lets the fragile sequence break,
sending with shouts the horrible errors of childhood
storming out to play through the broken dyke.

And as elephants parade holding each elephant's tail,
but if one wanders the circus won't find the park,
I call it cruel and maybe the root of all cruelty
to know what occurs but not recognize the fact.

And so I appeal to a voice, to something shadowy,
a remote important region in all who talk:
though we could fool each other, we should consider—
lest the parade of our mutual life get lost in the dark.

For it is important that awake people be awake,
or a breaking line may discourage them back to sleep;
the signal we give—yes or not, or maybe—
should be clear; the darkness around us is deep.

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