



TSP TIMES

CHRISTMAS EDITION

December 12, 2010

Trinity-St. Paul's United Church and Centre for Faith, Justice and the Arts
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Ministers' Christmas Message

by Vicki Obedkoff and Hans van Nie

The United Church's mission theme from September 2009 to 2011 is "Living for the Earth: Choosing Creation over Empire."

The logo (below), designed for "Challenging Empire" by Joyce Cosby, represents using the image of people working together at pulling the net - which represents the unjust systems which oppress people and hold the Earth captive; these include globalization, militarization, consumerism, ecological destruction, racism, and sexism. With this work, all of creation begins to burst free.

As we celebrate Christmas, we might consider whether our celebration reflects a choice to affirm the unjust systems of Empire or a choice to honour Creation and bring about freedom. Christmas in the world around us seems to emanate from the shopping malls. That's where we find the most glamorous Christmas trees and where Santa holds court. According to Scotiabank's Holiday Spending Study, the average Canadian spent \$907 on Christmas in 2009. Ernst & Young expects holiday spending to rise by 2 - 3% this year. Much of the money that is spent goes to buy goods that have been produced at the expense of vulnerable people in poor parts of the world and at a great

cost to fragile ecosystems. Piling these goods under our Christmas trees surely represents a choice to support the empire and its network of unjust systems.

Are there ways in which we can choose Creation over Empire this Christmas? Of course! We could start by spending less than \$900 on consumer goods, or better yet, direct our resources to alternative giving and the support of organizations and projects that are working for justice and peace. We can put our time into social activities and family gatherings that revolve

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Ministers' Christmas Message from page 1

Christmas Services:

Sunday, Dec 19 - 10:30 a.m.

Christmas Pageant

Sunday, Dec 19 - 7:00 p.m.

Carols by Candlelight

Friday, Dec 24 - 7:00 p.m

(at Bloor Street United Church)

Christmas Eve for all ages

Friday, Dec 24 - 10:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Communion

Sunday, Dec 26 - 10:30 a.m.

Christmas Sunday

(led by Paul Stott)

around story-telling and cooperative activities rather than entertainment and alcohol.

And, of course, we can spend some time in church. A good number of folk at Trinity-St. Paul's have been very busy preparing special Christmas events. The Sunday morning service on December 19th will feature another Christmas Pageant written and directed by David Craig. On the evening of the 19th we will enjoy another fine service of Carols by Candlelight with lots of guest musicians. On Christmas Eve there will be a service for All Ages at Bloor Street United Church at 7:00 p.m., and a Christmas Communion at TSP at 10:00 p.m. Our Advent & Christmas theme this year is "All Earth Is Waiting." All earth is waiting for the Empire to be challenged, for Creation to be set free.

With best wishes for peace on earth, goodwill to all.

From your pastoral ministry team,

Vicki Obedkoff & Hans van Nie

Christmas Pageant

Back by popular demand

Trinity St Paul's Christmas Pageant

Written and directed by: David Craig

Staring: Youth on Bloor and TSP Children Church

Sunday, December 19, 2010

@ 10:30 am Worship

Trinity St Paul's United Church

Come and see the return of Agnes the Sheep.

We are looking for volunteers!

If you are interested, contact Jane Wood: 416-769-6646 or

woodjacan@yahoo.com



Children's Church

By Patty Zuver

The past three months have been exciting ones for Children's Church; we've welcomed one new teacher, Christy Bray, and two new volunteers, Faderr John and Miriam Graham MacNeill. All have admirably risen to their tasks!

Martha's class is greatly benefiting from Miriam's joyful and engaging presence and Martha appreciates having that extra set of hands in the busy 3-6 room. Faderr has been helping out with various tasks and we all appreciate his calm and cheerful nature. The kids have loved getting to know Christy, their new 6-8 teacher who has a warm personality and connects easily with all the children.

We "kicked off" our season with a game of kickball at Palmerston school - it was a great game (despite the initial deflated ball) and a really great way to reintroduce ourselves. The next few weeks were spent exploring various stories and themes from the Bible and learning about growing in God's love. The children have been learning through games, crafts, drama, art and story-telling and about what it means to live in God's ways in today's challenging world.

We've had a couple of pizza lunches together and it's always nice to connect on a more "social" level for both the children and adults. There will be more of these to come!

We're all looking forward to Advent and all this exciting season brings and waiting for the exciting birth of Hope in Jesus. And, of course, we're all looking forward to the Pageant!

This year's Pageant will start off with a play written by David Craig and presented by Youth on Bloor. The Children's Church will be involved in the second half of the drama: a more traditional pageant. Rehearsals are already underway with the dress rehearsal being on Saturday, December 18th. The Pageant will take place during the service on December 19th.

Looking forward, we are planning on an evening get-together sometime in February to discuss Children's Church: what our hopes, dreams and challenges are as parents and facilitators. Please try to join us for what should be a fun (and informative) evening. In the meantime, may the Peace of Christmas find you in this busy season!

Season for Commitment Dinner

By Linda Dawn Pettigrew

On Sunday November 14th I was one of the several fortunate dinner guests at Gillian Graham's and Gordon MacNeill's. We couldn't have felt more welcome and thoroughly enjoyed the many delicious home-cooked Indian dishes along with their hospitality and the ambience of the evening. Inspired by the earlier service on community in which local indigenous food such as the three sisters - corn, beans and squash - were fore fronted, the table was beautifully set on this theme.

We laughed often and openly discussed inclusion at TSP from a variety of perspectives. I couldn't have had a better time. I feel much more a part of the TSP community having had this opportunity. Next year I hope to host a lunch or dinner. It was a bit disappointing that no one signed up for mine this year. It's a great way to really get to know other members and I wouldn't miss it for the world.

TSP Outreach Grants Fund recipients 2010

As many of you may know, one of the roles of the Public Witness Circle is to disperse the *Outreach Grants Fund* which provides funding for projects that advance social change, focus on the removal of inequities and empower marginalized groups. From received applications, the Circle makes recommendations to the TSP Board for decision.

Applications are considered, among other things, in light of the applicant's commitment to the above objectives. We are currently focusing, in particular, on the areas of housing/homelessness, aboriginal justice, peace making and climate change.

I am pleased to report that the *Outreach Grants Fund* for 2010 has been divided among the following organizations: Each program is recommended by someone from the congregation who is familiar with it. Over the course of the next year, during communion Sunday announcements, we hope these persons will provide updates on the various projects.

Women in Peace Network, Zorzor District, Liberia

Project: Cotton planting initiative

The *Women in Peace Network* is composed of women from Zorzor and Salayea who conduct regular prayer meetings to help reduce the trauma of war. It has established a cotton planting initiative as an income-generating and empowerment project. The cotton project will reduce the women's sense of dependency and trauma by allowing them to generate income for themselves. Donated will be used for seed, clearing of land, tools, etc.

Women in Peace Network, Zorzor District, Liberia

Project: Completion of a Peace Hall

In addition to the cotton project, the *Women in Peace Network* is building a hall where they can hold their weekly meetings, seminars, and use as a shelter for women and children in need. Construction has already commenced by the women with the use of their own funds which they raised themselves but now require additional funds for building materials.

Fraternidad de Presbiteriales Mayas (Network of Maya Presbyterians of the Presbyterian Church)

Project: Rabbit husbandry initiative

Guatemala endured heavy rains in 2010 resulting in the loss of animals and field crops for many families. Through this initiative, 8 women will receive 4 pairs of rabbits and related equipments. The community will provide food for the animals. The project will improve the nutrition, well-being and capacity of the women to sustain themselves. The funds will be used to purchase the animals and equipments.

Cordillera Peoples Alliance

Project: MAQUITACDG assembly

MAQUITACDG is an assembly of four provinces in the Philippines, being convened to address issues relating to the operation of the Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company which is causing waste and tailings to be dumped into the Abra River, the most extensive river system in the Philippines. Dumping in the river has caused serious problems for the communities along the river, such as decreased agricultural yield, deterioration of riparian life, etc. The funds donated will be used, among other things, for supplies and travel to the assembly.

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TSP Outreach Grants*(From page 4)***Rebecca Garret Videographer**

Project: A video depicting a march that occurred on the eve of the G8/G20 summit

This video depicts over 3,000 people (including members of TSP) marching through Toronto in support of indigenous rights. It features poetry by Cree poet Michael Jean-Paul Martin. The video will be used, among other things, to create solidarity among social justice and faith communities, including indigenous peoples. The funds will be used for post production and equipment.

Canadian Friends Service Committee

Project: DVD on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

This DVD is being prepared by an ad hoc group, including human rights and indigenous organizations. The purpose of the DVD is to explain the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and is meant to be used in workshops in indigenous communities throughout Canada. Donated funds will be used to cover the additional expenses for travel to workshops and for film expenses.

FCJ Refugee Centre

Project: Overall support of the work of the Centre

The Refugee Centre serves refugees and others at risk due to their refugee status by providing advice, counsel and support about the refugee process and related matters. The centre also provides temporary housing for women and children refugee claimants along with refugee settlement services. Donated funds will be used to support a TSP assisted refugee family as well as for general support to the FCJ.

Ecumenical Institute for the Empowerment of Dalits

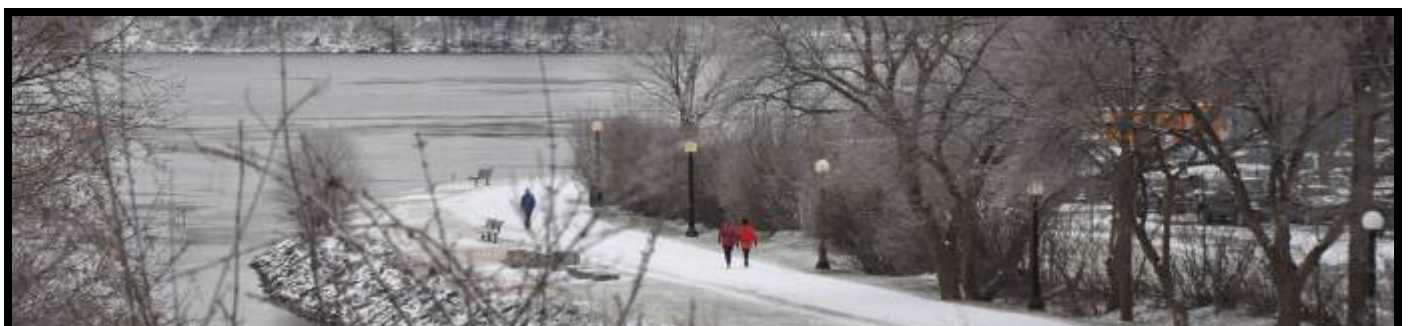
Project: Training program for Dalit women

This is a program for people belonging to the Dalit caste in the Safai Karmachari communities in India. It will provide a basic course in beauty management and tailoring. The training will allow participants to find jobs or join advanced courses with an aim to improving their living standards. Donated funds will be used to pay for beautician and tailoring courses for 45 people.

Just Earth Coalition

Project: Town Hall and Panel Discussion with the topic "Climate Change as a Crisis"

This project is intended to increase community awareness of the need for immediate measures that will mitigate climate change and to provide the groundwork for serious discussion on the approach(es) to be taken at the time of crisis. The funding would go towards costs associated with the day's activities.



What Does the Worship and Faith Formation Circle Do?

By Anne Sheppard

The role of the *Worship and Faith Formation (WaFF) Circle* is to facilitate activities in the congregation that help us learn about our Christian faith and how to express it. As part of the TSP circle structure, we co-ordinate opportunities for engaging in spiritual reflection and practice; and in these areas, we provide leadership support and development. We are responsible, throughout the year, for all aspects involved in the creation of worship.

Creation of Worship encompasses the following:

- +Sunday morning services and special worship services
- +Choir
- +Prayers of the People and Scripture readings
- +Communion servers
- +Greeters and ushers
- +Nursery care

Opportunities to learn about and express our Christian faith include the following:

- +Children's Church
- +Youth on Bloor
- +Bible study groups
- +Topical discussion groups
- +Group excursions and reflection

WaFF meets for two hours, 5 times a year but has oversight for a large part of the ongoing running of weekly activities at TSP. This is a daunting responsibility which obviously requires more frequent time and communication to carry out than our circle meetings can provide. Therefore, the details of running these weekly activities are done separately by specific task groups such as the Worship Planning group (which meets every Tuesday) or by individuals in specific roles, such as the following: Children's Church Coordinator, Youth on Bloor Coordinator, Adult Education Coordinator and our Pastoral Staff and Music Director.

During the 5 circle meetings we discuss general over-arching directions for worship and faith formation in our congregation. We try to ensure we meet the goals of the TSP board's 5 year plan and the objectives of the Centre for Faith Justice and Arts. We discuss upcoming events and determine what coordination is required to carry out needed tasks.

As a member of this circle, you have the opportunity to learn about some of the underlying policies and practices of our church, such as the Anti-Racism policy or the Song of Faith; and you have a voice in how we can better implement them. What often gets revealed through our lively discussions is how the tasks of this circle touches on all other circle's tasks as well: nurturing community and discipleship, public witness and stewardship.

We are always interested in new members. If you cannot commit to the 5 circle meetings a year, perhaps you would like to consider being a greeter, a communion server or a reader of scripture, or a supply Nursery Care worker or a volunteer in Children's Church. To find out more, or to indicate an interest in being a member, please contact Anne Sheppard at a.sheppard@rogers.com.



Update - TSP Exploring and Developing our Future as a Centre for Faith, Justice and the Arts

By Lyn Gaetz

The concept of a Centre for Faith, Justice, and the Arts builds on our long history as a faith community with strong connections to the arts and social justice. Together, with current and new partnerships and collaborations within and beyond this building, we are looking to develop new and creative ideas, activities and actions that support transformation in our world. We intentionally weave together the 3 strands of faith (inter-faith), social justice and the arts. A priority in TSP's five-year plan is to operationalize the CFJA through vibrant synergistic partnering and programs.

This fall, Duncan Holmes, Chair of our Board, provided superb facilitation for our Implementation Team. We began by imagining the best possible future for the CFJA in terms of how we would like to see it living and functioning in our community. We developed scenarios we could present to the Board and the congregation for consideration. The framework used included factors such as current practice, the role of the congregation, potential partnerships, infrastructure required, governance, benefits to the congregation and timelines for implementation.

The three scenarios we chose were based on the premise that the engagements and partnerships of the CFJA are vetted through the lens of supporting faith, social justice or the arts.

Over the course of our discussions we discerned that these scenarios are like stages in a continuum and that we are presently living-out scenario number one. The discernment came when we recognized we are now moving into scenario number two. We hold scenario three as a possible vision of how, in future, the CFJA could intentionally live out its mission. (This handout is available upon request.)

Scenario two focuses on “partner synergy - inviting and supporting initiatives from partners from both within and beyond the building”. In the Sanctuary, we will build on our congregation's strengths in spoken word and music and move ahead with activities which presently, do not require renovations - our strategic direction being, maximizing use of the Sanctuary. We will complement the work of the Property Management Team which seeks to maximize Sanctuary use and will market the Sanctuary's strengths to the university and wider community who may be seeking lecture and special event space.

The committee will proceed by calling together 3 focus groups, seeking “champions” from within and beyond our congregation to explore the feasibility of the following three areas as potential initiatives for the CFJA in the near future.

One group will explore play reading series in the Sanctuary, building on David Craig's connections and creativity and Jane Wood's production skills.

A second group will explore local food, environmental health and climate justice, which could involve showing documentaries, inviting speakers, and making better use of our community kitchen. Christine Wong and Johann Cooper are presently taking initiatives in this area.

The third group will pick up on our congregation's desire for hands-on service to the community and interest in affordable housing. We will explore the idea of a weekly meal or drop-in in the West Wing. There is also the potential focus for bringing together live-alone seniors (wanting to share their home) with compatible and reliable students or other persons. The CFJA could provide the requirements for a safe environment and

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Financial Report on Our Season for Commitment

I am most pleased to report we have just finished a sterling *Season for Commitment* not only in terms of money pledged, but also (I heard) for the dinners as well.

- Our budgeted hope for the *Fall Appeal* (to top up our 2010 income) was \$42,000 and so far we have received \$46,864!
- Our budget target for *2011 Local Givings* is \$235,000 and we have pledged \$218,646 (or 93%) of that target. We normally receive an additional \$20,000 from non-pledged sources, so our target looks realistic.
- As usual, our pledges (\$115,266) for *Mission and Service* exceed our target (\$110,000) so I'll have to change our budget!

We have nine (9) new pledgers this year with four (4) quite new names.

This congregation continues to astound me with its generosity in giving time as well as money. It's a great act of faith and commitment to our building together a community for ourselves and for others.

Profound thanks to all of us!
Bob Fugere, Treasurer

TSP as a Centre for ...

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meeting place. Bob Fugere has already spoken with Councillor Adam Vaughn about making connections with seniors in this ward and will invite student organizations as well. Don Middleton has indicated interest and James Holzbauer sees potential for introducing George Brown personal care students to seniors interested in doing a work exchange. The students need places to stay in order to pursue their studies and can offer personal care services to the seniors in exchange for affordable home stays.

At the September Board Retreat our team recommended we intentionally explore scenario two in 2011. Vicki and Hans have thought about and discussed this with prayerful consideration. In October the Board gave its approval for Vicki, in 2011, to devote one day a week working with our team in implementing scenario two. Hans and Vicki, within their team have worked the re-allocation of some pastoral responsibilities. Hans will also be involved with CFJA work. We

will collaborate with Property Management Committee around the goal of a financially and environmentally sustainable building. A budget allocation of \$5,000 was approved to help with the CFJA's work.

Hans and Vicki have been part of several Property Management Committee strategic planning sessions, excellently facilitated by arts consultant Joanne Morrow, whose office is in the building.

If you are excited about one of these three feasibility explorations, please let us know. If you are passionate about another idea and our work, we would love to have you on the CFJA implementation team. We meet the first Thursday of the month, starting January, from 5:00 until 6:30 p.m.

In hopeful anticipation,

Lyn Gaetz, Chair, CFJA Implementation Team
 Members: Janet Mairs, Terry Williams, Brad Ratzlaff, supported by Vicki Obedkoff

“If you love this planet, demand action on climate change.”

By Betty Anderson

Trinity St. Paul's commitment to climate justice and environmental sustainability takes many forms. In October the TSP Church Board adopted a Policy Statement that will help us be systematic in our efforts to live sustainably and to provide benchmarks for tracking our progress.

The Policy Statement, available on the web or by email from Betsy Anderson, starts with an excerpt from the United Church's Song of Faith, including:

*Each part of creation reveals unique aspects of God the Creator,
who is both in creation and beyond it.
All parts of creation, animate and inanimate, are related.
All creation is good.
We sing of the Creator,
who made humans to live and move
and have their being in God.
In and with God, we can direct our lives toward right relationship
with each other and with God.
We can discover our place as one strand in the web of life.*

The *Stewardship of Resources Circle* along with *Public Witness Circle* initiated this Policy Statement and will give leadership in ensuring we live it out in our life together as a congregation. It is built on the great work done by individuals, the circles and staff. The Eco-Fair of the last two years is an excellent example. We hope it will help to confirm our commitments and stimulate all of us to take new actions, both personal and collective.

The Statement enumerates the actions and activities already taken in four areas: Education and Advocacy, Routine Actions, Renovations and Repairs, Potential “Demonstration” Projects. It also outlines commitments under each section such as measuring our carbon footprint as individuals and congregation, organizing learning sessions so we can learn from each other and others, using environmentally friendly cleaning products whenever possible, monitoring and managing our energy consumption, using organic and local foods at congregational events, using environmentally sustainable materials in building renovations, etc.

This is a living document and will grow and evolve with the ideas, energy and knowledge of the congregation. We invite all with passion or interest to make suggestions, initiate projects and encourage us all as we live into a place of integrity and faithfulness with the gift of God's creation.

If you would like to get involved in this area of our congregation's life or have suggestions or concerns, contact Christine Wong (cjwong@sympatico.ca), Betsy Anderson (betsy.anderson@primus.ca) or Vicki Obedkoff (vobedkoff@trinitystpauls.ca). We are also looking for a new member of the Public Witness circle who will be the liaison for this work. Contact Vicki if you want to know more.

“And the world is about to turn.”

*Let the fires sing of the day you bring,
May the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
And the world is about to turn.*

-- *More Voices, 120*

This hymn has been ringing in my head for the past while. You may recognize it from my Palestine/Israel presentation. It seems to capture the essence of that transformative time and now, again, as I reflect on my time at Turn!

In October I spent four days in Pinawa, Manitoba for a national United Church event sponsored by the Justice, Global, and Ecumenical Relations (JGER) unit. I gathered with approximately 170 other people - clergy, lay, young adults - all committed to social justice issues grounded in faith. It was a restorative and re-energizing weekend in my call to seek justice.

Our time together began with a sacred fire hosted by our Aboriginal brothers. While standing in two circles, an inner and outer, we listened to the importance of the fire as it reminded us that the Creator and the Spirit are in our midst and of our need to give thanks. One by one we each put our offering of tobacco into the fire and watched as it lifted our prayers to the Creator. This was followed by a smudging ceremony where we were cleansed with burning sage. I watched the incredibly beautiful moon above and it kept me thankful and present in the moment.

It was a weekend filled with worships, plenary speakers, workshops, and community time. For the plenary, Alanna, Athena, and Paulette focused on the theme of Creation: We heard many disturbing facts:

- By 2013, in the North-West passage, there will be no ice during
- By 2020, African agriculture will be cut in half.

- Floods, earthquakes, and famines continue to devastate developing countries.

The Global North is not living out its moral responsibility to recognize and pay the climate debt. There were facts upon facts upon facts. We were asked, “Where is wisdom crying out in the streets?”

Throughout the weekend there was wisdom spoken in many conversations and workshops and we delved into issues of advocacy, interfaith relations, climate change, and the ever-growing need for social change. In a workshop I attended, a partner of ours from Brazil, quoting text from Isaiah, spoke about the need to care for Creation and for having a perspective which includes all of creation: animals, plants, fish, and trees. As a people of faith, we can see how ALL of Creation is God’s and the need to re-state the importance of caring for our home, our earth.

The worships were life-giving and moving; I often found myself tearing up as people passionately expressed their faith and I recognized how their callings were aligned with mine. Prayer time and Scripture readings grounded me in why I was there and why I continue to feel called to do this work. Receiving communion from past-moderator Stan MacKay reminded me of where I need to be - in community - working for justice and the vision God dreamed of, with Jesus Christ as my centre.

I am so grateful for the weekend; I was surrounded by people I love and admire - my best friends and mentors. I had conversations around food justice, youth involvement, and

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Living with Grief – A Bereavement Support Group

By Vicki Obedkoff and Elaine Gort

***“They can be a great help - words. They can become the Spirit’s hands and lift and caress.”
(Meister Eckhart)***

A support group for sharing the uniqueness and commonality of one’s grief journey was offered at TSP, co-led by Vicki Obedkoff and Elaine Gort. From Wednesday, November 10th to Wednesday, December 1st, the sessions were two hours in length and commenced at 2 p.m. A follow-up session is being offered on January 12th.

As a minister, Vicki has closely accompanied dying people; and at the end of an intense accompaniment she finds herself going through the grieving process as well. Some of those she accompanied have been beloved members of the congregation and individuals she has known for many years, and whom she finds herself missing. Also, at the request of members of friendship circles she has been asked to be part of accompaniment teams and as a bereaved best friend and cousin, Vicki knows the accompanying feelings of sadness, anger and unfairness around the death of a young mother from cancer.

As a bereaved mother, daughter, aunt and sister-in-law, Elaine has been both a principle mourner and supporter of others on their grief journey. Over the past 20 years, she has been part of bereavement support groups - first as a participant, then as a trainee facilitator and co-facilitator.

As I think back over my grief journey and ask myself what was helpful for me, I know for certain the support of and connection with others was and still remains the most important factor. This assisted me in attaining a sense of hope and the ability to regain a sense of joy. Getting to the place where I could integrate the reality of our son’s death into my everyday life was not a point I arrived at through passivity. It required and still requires now, an internal

processing accompanied by a willingness to risk speaking about some of my ongoing grief.

Death is a part of life, but increasingly in this day and age, it is not a part we are prepared for or know how to respond to when it happens to someone dear to us. The death of a loved one can be a traumatic and isolating experience. Each person connected to the one who has died is launched on a journey not of their choosing and one that has few sign posts. While each person’s grief has unique aspects there are often similarities and connections to the grief and mourning of others in ones community.

There is no right or wrong way to grieve. The experience and expression of a person’s grief is closely connected to the relationship to the person who has died. It is also influenced by life experiences and personality as well as cultural customs, rituals, and societal rules for coping with loss. Those customs and rules can create pressure on a person in mourning to just get over it and get on with life. Thus a person may be left to mourn in silence and isolation. This potential repression of ones grief is counterproductive as the strong emotions, fears and anxieties that are repressed will very likely surface in the future and be much harder to handle at that point in time. It may not be easy to make the connection between the repressed memories and feelings and for example, a strong reaction to a seemingly minor event.

There are many dimensions to the grief surrounding the death of a loved one. While emotional responses may be primary; there are also prominent physical, cognitive, behavioral, social, and philosophical or spiritual dimensions. Emotional reactions of grief may include deep sorrow, sadness,

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Living with grief

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anger, guilt, anxiety, and despair. Physical reactions of grief may include prolonged crying or inability to cry, disturbed sleep, changes in appetite, physical problems, ailments or worsening of existing ailments. One's thought processes may be altered leading to confusion or disorientation. Normal everyday behaviour and social encounters may become problematic. Questions around the meaning of life and death may assume a focal point in one's thinking.

The grief journey is not about forgetting and assigning it to the past. Rather, it is about remembering, honouring and hopefully integrating the richness of the relationship without denying the pain of the loss. It takes hard work to achieve a new 'normal' - life without the physical presence of your loved one. Some of that work or processing can be done alone - meditatively and through meaningful rituals. Often being able to talk about the multiple aspects of one's grief is an integral part of the grief journey. However, over time, the fear that sharing one's story yet again is a burden on family and friends can silence a griever. A person who is grieving may also feel they no longer have anything to offer others and this assumed loss of mutuality in daily interactions compounds the initial loss. In a support group, sharing one's grief story with other grievers is a possible way to achieve a measure of healing. Listening to others tell their stories and share how they cope and how they get through the day is both a resource and a way to reacquire a sense of mutuality.



Finding the where-with-all to meet the demands of the grief journey is not easy, but knowing that you are not alone on this journey can be a source of strength and blessing.

If you are interested in participating in another bereavement series during the winter/spring, please contact Vicki at vobedkoff@trinitystpauls.ca or call at 416-922-8435 #24 for more info.

And the world is about to turn ...

(From page 10)

others; I constantly felt the Spirit moving. There were moments of laughter, joy, and of feeling God's presence fill the space.

Flying home, I had moments of anxiety thinking about what I was coming back to. Physically and mentally, it's hard to leave a place where one feels called to be. I opened

the window-shade by my seat and felt speechless - a beautiful, great and glorious moon greeted my eyes and reminded me of the beauty and presence of God in my life and the line of the hymn came to my mind, "And the world is about to turn!"

Keele Dinners - Restorative Justice?

By Elda Thomas

What is Keele? A red brick, non-descript government building located on a major thoroughfare; it houses a post office and a Corrections Canada Community Centre. The Centre accommodates 35-40 men who have served long sentences but are deemed by Corrections Canada to be “high risk” and hence unsuitable for living in a regular half-way house or to return to the community at this time. Many of these men, those on Long-Term Supervision Orders, are required to be supervised for 5 - 10 years after their sentence for the crime is over, some of whom have a residency requirement built into the Order.

The walls of the centre are an institutional grey but because of a creative and insightful director they are covered with paintings, some done by in-house artists who are serving sentences at the Centre. The Director has not only permitted the hanging of paintings, she has also actively encouraged and assisted them in entering the *Junction Art Festival*, and has invited professional artists to meet with them and support an art program developed by a Chaplaincy volunteer.

The Director has convinced donors to provide a piano, rugs, attractive furniture, and a library. Her belief is that the men will respond to pleasant and beautiful surroundings. Her faith in this is justified by the fact the centre has had no vandalism; and vandalism is often the excuse given as a reason for not providing such amenities for prisoners - they would not appreciate them.

The Director has also been very supportive of the Chaplaincy program where meals are prepared by different churches and cooked and served by volunteers. She often brings visitors (not to partake) to the dinners to see how it works.

This past Monday, TSP generously

responded to the request that TSP provide a dinner for the men at the Centre. These meals are a highlight for them. I have often said how much they appreciate the food, especially the sweets. I was reminded this week again of why this is so.

Volunteers from Community Chaplaincy and Circles of Support and Accountability are paying an annual visit to Warkworth Institution to bring a Christmas service and communion. We are not allowed to bring anything homemade, even when made by church volunteers, for security reasons. So for the men at Keele, since anything homemade has been denied them for many years, not only devour all they can at the meal, but will also take plates back to their rooms to savour over the following day or two. The cookies are symbolic of home, an idealized home more like those depicted in old films or sentimental TV programs, since most of them have not known a loving or stable one, but a powerful image just the same.

Meals are not provided by the residence. Instead, the men are given a (small) allowance out of which they are required to buy their food, cook it themselves, as well as pay for toiletries, clothing, and transportation.

Since the men do not know one another, are in transition, and must conform to the prison code of hierarchy, depending on the nature of the crime, they do not associate with one another. Some do develop alliances with one or two others but normally, they do not eat with one another. Thus the Meals at Keele are about much more than just food. They are about learning to live in community.

Volunteers arrive at Keele between 4:30 and 5:00. We set up in the kitchen, heat the dinner and serve it cafeteria style. Harry

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Keele Dinners ...

(From page 13)

(Community Chaplain) introduces the volunteers and says where they are from, then asks a blessing. Some of the men join the volunteers at the table and some take their food to their rooms.

Conversation is general, sometimes lively. It is one of the only times some of the men interact with people who have not been incarcerated. Following the meal there is a gathering in Harry's office attended by some of the men and most of the volunteers. This is

a time of reflection, of sharing on the Biblical passage for the day, of talking about personal concerns. For me, it is a very moving time, as the men share fears and past experiences in an incredibly open and powerful way.

From all at Keele, thanks to all those who have given so generously to make this meal happen.

If you are interested in getting involved, please call Elda Thomas at 416-964-2885.

TSP News

Stewardship Matters

Did you know that through your TSP contributions to the *Mission and Service Fund*, you help support the *Malvern Community Outreach Ministry* in the northeast part of Scarborough, a community with many social problems? The project was started by Toronto Scarborough Presbytery and works with several groups to provide a supportive network for youth. It runs an after-school program where homework can be done in a safe environment with adult help, as well as a parent support program to help parents cope with issues surrounding the education of their children.

Indigenous Environmental Network

Anyone wanting information on the climate change negotiations in Cancun, or environmental campaigns involving First Nations people should check out the IEN website at <http://redroadcancun.com>.

Pia Bowman's School for Ballet and Creative Movement
25th Anniversary Production of the
NUTCRACKER!

Performances are at HumberSide C.I. 280 Quebec Ave

Thursday:	Dec 16 th @ 7:30pm
Friday:	Dec 17 th @ 7:30pm
Saturday:	Dec 18 th @ 1:30 and 7:30pm
Sunday:	Dec 19 th @ 1:30

Tickets: \$15 to \$40 Adults; \$10 to \$35 children/students/seniors
 For reservations, seating sections, family discounts and prices go to
www.piaboumanschool.org or call (416)532-8705

Calling all Santa's Elves

We will be decorating the Sanctuary
December 12th, after 5:30 pm

If you are interested in assisting, please mark your calendars.
Dinner and Hot chocolate will be served.
Contact Derek at 416-762-4218 or
send a note to dstrachan99@gmail.com

Christmas Ornaments

If you have old ornaments or Christmas decorations you
no longer use and would like to donate to the TSP Decorating
Elves,
please bring them into the church before December 12th.
Contact Derek at 416-762-4218 or at dstrachan99@gmail.com
if they need to be picked up.

Christmas Pageant Rehearsals

For speaking roles; Rehearsal: December 12th
Dress Rehearsal: December 18th
For non speaking roles; Rehearsal: December 18th

Open Christmas Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, December 23rd at 7 pm
Join Brad and the TSP choir to rehearse
for the Christmas Eve service.
All are welcome.



Hymnology 101

Do you want to learn more about the hymns we sing in our worship services? Find out more about *Voices United* and *More Voices*? Explore how hymns contribute to our worship life? Here is your chance.

Paul Stott, our resident hymn blogger, will be leading a two hour introduction to Hymnology on Saturday morning, January 8, 2011. Come at 9:30 a.m. for coffee and muffins, and then gather in the sanctuary to learn about our hymns, and also do some singing, with Brad providing accompaniment. All are welcome, whether you are a singer or not. For more information, or to register (so we will know how much coffee to make), contact Paul at paul.stott@sympatico.ca or (416) 533-7595.

About the TSP Times

The TSP Times is a bi-monthly newsletter for members and friends of Trinity-St. Paul's United Church and CFJA. Submissions from all members of the congregation are welcome. Please send your items to tsptimes_editor@trinitystpauls.ca. The deadline for the next issue is **January 31, 2010**.

Sarah Landry - Editor, Vivianti Santosa - Layout.

Are you on the List?

TSP has an on-line **list serve** that sends out information on activities, upcoming events, the weekly announcements, and other items of interest to people at TSP. You can get each email message or a daily digest. It is an easy way to keep track of what is going on. To join the list serve, log into the website. (You will need to register if you haven't already) On the right side of the page, there is a grey box with your name at the top of it. Click on the "My Account / Mailing Lists" link. Scroll down to TSP list on the left and click on the button for emails. Then you too can be up-to-date!

Alternatively, you can go to: <http://lists.trinitystpauls.ca/listinfo.cgi/tsplist-trinitystpauls.ca> and provide your name and e-mail.

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