

Minister's Report

When I was a very young "pencil-packin' mama, I had the great pleasure of interviewing a woman named Lenore Hershey. She was many years older than I but we immediately connected and corresponded back in the days when one typed on a manual typewriter and put letters into the mail.

Lenore was from New York and was the Editor of McCall's magazine – the best women's magazine on the market at that time.

At Christmas that year, she wrote something that I have used over and over again at Christmas services. I told her it was the best thing she ever wrote! I want to share it with you as we head into the holiday season. May it be a favourite of yours too!

CHRISTMAS is celebration; and celebration is instinct in the heart. With gift and feast, with scarlet ribbon and fresh green bough, with merriment and the sound of music, we commend the day—oasis in the long, long landscape of the commonplace. Through how many centuries, through how many threatening circumstances, has Christmas been celebrated, since that cry came ringing down the ages, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11 KJV)

Christmas is celebration, but the traditions that cluster sweetly around the day have significance only if they translate the heart's intention—the yearning of the human spirit to express faith and hope and love. Without this intention, the gift is bare, and the celebration a touch of tinsel, and the time without meaning. As these attributes, exemplifying the divine spark in mankind, informed the first Christmas and have survived the onslaughts of relentless time, so do they shine untarnished in this present year of our Lord.

Faith and hope and love, which cannot be bought or sold or bartered, but only given away are the wellsprings, firm and deep of Christmas celebration. These are the gifts without price, the ornaments incapable of imitation, discovered only within oneself and therefore unique. They are not always easy to come by, but they are in unlimited supply ever in the province of all.

THIS CHRISTMAS, mend a quarrel. Seek out a forgotten friend. Dismiss suspicion, and replace it with trust. Write a love letter. Share some treasure. Give a soft answer. Encourage youth. Manifest your loyalty in word and deed. Keep a promise. Find the time. Forgo a grudge. Forgive an enemy. Listen. Apologize if you were wrong. Try to understand. Flout envy. Examine your demands on others. Think first of someone else. Appreciate. Be kind; be gentle. Laugh a little. Laugh a little more. Deserve confidence. Take up arms against malice. Decry complacency. Express your gratitude. Go to church.

Welcome a stranger. Gladden the heart of a child. Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of the earth. Speak your love. Speak it again. Speak it still once again.

These are but inklings of a vast category; a mere scratching of the surface. They are simple things; you have heard them all before; but their influence has never been measured.

Christmas is celebration, and there is no celebration that compares with the realization of its true meaning—with the sudden stirring of the heart that has extended itself toward the core of life. Then, only then, is it possible to grasp the significance of the first Christmas—to savor in the inward ear the wild, sweet music of the angel choir; to envision the star-struck sky, and glimpse, behind the eyelids the ray of light that fell athwart a darkened path and changed the world.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This has been another eventful month.

Everyone enjoyed our Volunteer lunch on October 25th. This is our way of saying thank you to all our volunteers.

On November 8th we had an inspiring talk and workshop with Nancy Shipley Rubin. We look forward to seeing Nancy again in the spring.

We have had several new members in the last two months. It is nice to see people enjoying our centre and committing to membership. A warm welcome to our latest members Kressa Sisu and Iris Durling.

A reminder for anyone thinking of membership that our AGM is coming up in February and you have to be a member for 60 days prior to the AGM to be able to participate and Vote. All are welcome to attend the AGM but only members can vote.

Our annual Christmas pot-luck lunch is always a great success. Thanks to Christine Rerrie for organizing it and to Bonnie Youngman for cooking the turkeys.

Rev. Carrie is collaborating with Jessica Lucas to start a children's program this month. This will be a wonderful addition to our Centre.

We look forward to our Christmas events this month.

That's all for now.
All is good.

Love and Blessings
Anne Millar

AFFIRMATION FOR DECEMBER

*I am a transforming agent for peace and love on my planet!
Grace and gratitude overflow the vessel of my life!
And so it is!*

COSMIC KIDS

Our Cosmic Kids program begins Sunday, December 6th . We begin with a program for kids ages 7-12 and will expand our programs as there is a demand for them. Jessica Lucas, a truly conscious being will be leading the program.

If you have children, grandchildren, young relatives or neighbours whose children would benefit from a fabulous curriculum that gives them positive living skills, do pass the message along.

The program will be in our social room while the regular service is held upstairs.

For further information, please contact Rev. Carrie at revcarrie@telus.ca.

SPIRITUAL MIND TREATMENT/AFFIRMATIVE PRAYER

Our prayer team has been offering treatment following Sunday services and this is proving to be extremely popular with those attending. Many are reporting exciting results!

We are a prayer-based faith and our professional practitioners are happy to offer this service free of charge on Sundays. For longer sessions and spiritual counseling and coaching, feel free to book an appointment with one of our practitioners/ministers.

REV. CARRIE'S TOPICS FOR DECEMBER

December 6 – When Faith Meets Hope

December 13 – Gold, Common Sense and Fur

December 20 – Do You Hear What I Hear?

December 27 - Basking in the Afterglow

MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC!

NELSON IS OFF TO CUBA FOR A FEW MONTHS

Our heartfelt thanks to Nelson Brunanski for the work he has done leading our chorus on Sundays. Nelson is taking a break to go to Cuba and returns to our Centre March 13th.

We are so grateful for his talent, his spiritual presence, and for the work he does to select appropriate music for Sundays. Nelson, we wish you a blessed vacation in the sun! We will miss you. Ve con Dios!

THANKS TO LOUISE

KUDOS to Louise Eldridge for her dedicated leadership of our music program and her work with so many talented soloists who add such joy to our Sunday celebrations!

Soloists for December

December 6 – Elizabeth Adams

December 13 – Merissa Cox

December 20 - Darlene Haynes, Jenny Rhodes, Izad Etamadi, Alf Small, Merissa Cox, Elizabeth Adams and Lillian Slanina

December 27 - Jenny Rhodes and Izad Itamadi

TREASURE TABLE

Our Treasure Table will be offering items for sale for the first two Sundays in December. Bring your treasures along to share. It's a great place to Christmas shop!

BAKE SALE

Our bake sale will be Sunday, December 13th. This is always a wonderful event at our Centre and gives us the opportunity to buy a variety of home-baked goods for holiday entertaining. We welcome donations of baking that Sunday!

50/50

We will have a 50/50 draw each Sunday through December. Tickets are 3 for \$5.00. Bonnie Youngman was last week's winner! Congratulations Bonnie!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Co-op Number: Don't forget to use Michelle Marier's Co-op number when getting gas as the rebate is coming back to the Center. **29857**

Thrifty Foods Gift Cards: A wonderful way to support the financial health of our Centre is to use a Thrifty's Food Card. We have lots of them! Please see Pat Alfke Wright if you don't yet have one. When you load up your card and use it to buy groceries, the CSL Victoria receives 5% of everything you spend!

Pastoral Care Cards: Do you know someone in our congregation who is ill or in need of a pick me up? Contact Jeni Hillier at 250 598-8802 or j.hillier@shaw.ca. She would be happy to send a card.

Prayer Scarves: We provide prayer scarves or shawls to members of our congregation who have lingering illnesses or challenges. Irene Parkinson and Bonnie Youngman have created several of these and they are so appreciated by those who have received them! Rev. Carrie attaches prayers to the scarves before gifting them. If you know of someone with a serious illness who would benefit from one of these gifts, please contact Jeni or Rev. Carrie.

Please note: From time to time we will take pictures or videos of people at services or events to put on our Website or Facebook. Please let us know if you do not want to be included in this.

THANK YOU JEANNE RIOUX

Jeanne Rioux is stepping down from her position of Volunteer Coordinator and will be available to help train a replacement. If this position speaks to you, please let Rev. Carrie know!

And our thanks to Jeanne for her dedication to the Centre and the service she has given. It has been generous and unstinting. She now opens the door for someone new to lead our team leaders! We love you Jeanne!

SACRED SERVICE

Give us the "gift of you" at our Sunday services! There are many ways to serve at our Centre – everything from greeting to set-up – to making coffee and washing dishes. If some of you have not yet committed to volunteering, please contact Rev. Carrie to discuss opportunities.

ONGOING EVENTS

Amazing Grays: Amazing Grays: *This women's spiritual discussion group meets on the 2nd Friday of each month. For information, please contact Christine Rerrie at crerrie@shaw.ca*