



News and Views Union Church

September 2007

- In the pews on Sept. 9th -

The summer has been an adventurous time of book reading for me. I flew with the final installment of Harry Potter (J. K. Rowling), felt sorrow and yet hope with the Kite Runner (Khaled Hosseini), learned about a new and compelling theory of social change in The Tipping Point (Malcolm Gladwell), became conscious of how unconsciously we live in Blink (also by Malcolm Gladwell), and felt energized and excited about Practicing our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People (Dorothy Bass).

Interesting enough, even though these books were very diverse in nature and theme, there was a common thread running through them. In various ways and manners, all expressed the necessity of practising a particular way of living. Practice remains indispensable for a life that makes a meaningful difference.



Jeanne & Veronica, Music Party

As we know, many folk in Quebec have walked away from the practice of organized religion. They no longer fear "eternal damnation" and do not want or believe in the restrictive rules and regulations they have lived

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under for generations. And yet there is still a yearning for spiritual connection with God. We still search for a way of life that rather than depleting us feeds our soul.

There is a strong spirit stirring. There is a metamorphosis under way. The church as caterpillar is transforming into a church as butterfly. That is, where the church as institutional religion is giving way to the church as spiritual community. Religion in this context is defined by rules and regulations, reward and punishment: Living up to or measuring up to a set of standards and being damned or rejected if we don't. Judgment forms a central aspect of religion. Right or wrong, in or out, saved or lost. This kind of Christianity is dying rapidly in Quebec and truth be told it needs to.



Gisèle & Judy, Garage Sale

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Another kind of Christianity is emerging. Church as spiritual community is taking shape and readying for flight. However it is not an automatic. As the old Church of religious rules and righteousness fails, some will discover the spirit of transformation. This spirit invites all to come together, to connect, to practice compassion in community. This spirit calls us to bring forth a blessing and be blessed in the process. The personal piety of the past is replaced by participation in the present. The emphasis on judgment is replaced by an emphasis on justice. What counts is who participates in God's dream for humanity. If we don't show up to be part of God's grace in the world we miss out on that blessing. The more we participate, the more we learn to practice a life-giving way, the stronger our relationship with God becomes. It is an open system. We can throw our lot in with God's dream for humanity or continue to throw our lives away on self-serving distractions.

The newly emerging church offers an open invitation to practice a generosity of spirit that leads to healing, feeding and creating a safe place as we connect to God and one another. The church as spiritual community is taking flight. Are we ready to test our wings this September and soar with the Spirit?

Vicki

NEWS AROUND THE CHURCH

....We are sad to announce the death of Grace Mayo, mother of Rosemary Mayo (Gordon Erskine). Grace died in July and was a member of Union Choir for a few years.

....Our sympathy also to Cecile Coté whose sister died also in July.

....We warmly welcome Jordanna Arlene Ashworth, daughter of Jennifer Whiting and Wade Ashworth who was baptized on Aug. 26th. Jordanna is the first granddaughter for Don Whiting of N.D. de l'Ile Perrot.

....Congratulations to Mario Carangi and Mary Orlowski who were married at Union on Sept. 1st.

We warmly welcome Valerie Van de Weile, In-Ministry Year student at U.T.C. to Union this Fall. Valerie will be introduced at the Service on Sept. 16th.

....Our sympathy to Lori Neill, whose sister Cheryl passed away on Sept. 4th.

....It is good to be back in the office with jackhammers pounding in the background as men work on replacing the Adair Hall stairs. The donations have been trickling in over the summer as people opt to buy 1 or 2 stairs. They only cost \$250 a stair, so don't wait - work is being done as we go to print. (Form at back of this *NEWS*) Bonnie

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FALL SCHEDULE

Sun./Sept. 2, 10:30 a.m. Labour Day Service

Thurs./Sept. 6, 7:30 p.m. Spare Parts Practice

Sun./Sept. 9, 10:30 a.m. Communion Sunday followed by the Music Committee Meeting

Thurs./ Sept. 13 - Boutique "24" is opening with good used clothing, books, toys and household items for sale. Helpers are always needed to set up on Wednesdays or to be cashiers on Thursdays.

Sun./Sept. 16 - Welcome Back Service with music by Spare Parts Band, Kids' Program starts up, followed by a BBQ and Potluck Lunch. Hotdogs and drinks will be provided. You're invited to bring some finger food to share.

Sun./Sept. 23 - Worship at 10:30

Sun./Sept. 23 - "We Gather Together" (4:00 p.m.) , a contemporary time to be with God. For those who cannot make it for the morning Service and who may want something a little different we recommend coming out to Union.

Fri./Sept. 28 - 8 p.m. **COFFEE HOUSE & BLUES NIGHT** with Suzie Vinnick, vocalist extraordinaire. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. Admission: \$9. Delicious desserts & coffee by Twigs of Ste. Annes.

Sat./Sept. 29 **SEPTEMBERFEST** at Cooper's Aviation, 1684 Ste. Angelique, St. Lazare, Que. Games and good food for the whole family. Proceeds to go to Union Church. Co-ordinators, Jack Brown and Judy Cooper.

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR, NOVEMBER 3RD

Gardens are producing like crazy. Save some of your preserving and canning for the Bake Table. While you were enjoying the summer, how many books did you read? Save them for the Book Table. Maybe you were doing some craft work. We have a Craft Table. Maybe you were doing some closet and drawer cleaning - don't forget Granny's Attic. Sorting through your children's toys? Save them for the Toy Table. Watch for more info coming soon.
Winnifred Sherry, Publicity

KID'S PROGRAM - The children of the Church have been enjoying theme Sundays with various leaders from the congregation. Some of the themes have been "Music for the Soul", Bubbles, Rain Sticks, Mirror Magic, Good Vibration Experiment and others. Come and find out what is happening!

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YOUTH PROGRAM - Jen Owers has been keeping the teens busy so come out and join the fun on Sunday mornings and special events such as Improv. Night.

USED STAMPS - Cheryl Miller is collecting used stamps for the Leprosy Mission. Please trim them to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the edge and leave in the box on the table near the front door of the Church. The FOOD BANK is ongoing for local use and for St. Columba House. Donations of canned soups, meat, veggies, stews or dried food, juices and granola bars are also welcome.

Rick Hansen Foundation

I wish to thank all my Union Church family, for your generous contributions when I was campaigning for the Rick Hansen Foundation earlier this year. Due mostly to your generosity, I raised a very impressive amount, \$858.00!. The AQVA Team, which I was a member of, raised approximately \$2750.

The Foundation does such good work with their fundraising, I am very glad to have contributed to this fine organization. The West Island Event, held on June 10 2007. raised approximately \$20,000; half of which will go to the community to make adaptations to improve the quality of life for the physically challenged. The other half will be used by the Rick Hansen Foundation for their continuing research into Spinal Cord Injuries.

Many thanks again to everyone, your support means so much to me. Cheryl Miller.

REMEMBERING CRAIG

Firstly, I recall a spell in Session shared with several lively individuals who were never lacking opinions, nor were they unwilling to express them. These included Peggy and Charles Dingle and Doreen Canavan. Over a period of several months, we held meetings devoted mainly to considering criteria for accepting candidates for baptism, and the views expressed were extremely varied. Having covered most aspects of the subject, at the final meeting, Craig - speaking without notes - arrived at a masterful summary, reconciling all the divergent views, and expressed a policy with which all could agree. Yes, he had a remarkable intellect, and a wonderful facility of expression.

Then, there was an Easter morning Sunrise Service at the Pointe (of Pointe Claire) when Craig delivered a wonderful sermon, in both Français and English. It was clearly evident that he held the entire ecumenical, bilingual congregation entranced. After the service, as we were heading for our cars on the wharf, a Francophone gentleman, obviously impressed, asked me, "Who was that man who delivered such a fine message?" Just moments later I saw Craig and relayed the tribute to him. His response: "So Gerry, you said 'I have no idea' right?" Yes he had a delightful sense of whimsy.

Finally, there were so many Sundays during the tragically curtailed term of his ministry when he articulated a thought-provoking, well-crafted message which earned everyone's attention. Yes, Craig was a gifted preacher, and

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those of us who knew him are so much better for the experience. At Union's 90th anniversary service, after he had delivered a challenging oration on the theme "GO!" the Rev. Harold Kennedy, the interim minister who had followed Craig in our pulpit, said, "My, what a brilliant speaker."

I didn't argue.

Gerry Connery

A word of thanks to **Sylvie Dumas of Enseignes & Lettrage Dumas** 450-763-2424 dumas@partyplus.ca for her contribution towards the new sign on the wall of Adair hall. She has not charged the church for any of the work she has done.

REPORTEDLY TAKEN FROM ANSWER SHEETS to a Catholic church Sunday school quiz, judging from the last entry, somewhere in the U.S.A. - errors left in:

LOTS WIFE WAS A PILLAR OF SALT DURING THE DAY, BUT A BALL OF FIRE DURING THE NIGHT. THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT IS THOU SHALT NOT ADMIT ADULTERY. THE EPISTELS WERE THE WIVES OF THE APOSTLES. CHRISTIANS HAVE ONLY ONE SPOUSE. THIS IS CALLED MONOTONY. THE GREATEST MIRACLE IN THE BIBLE IS WHEN JOSHUA TOLD HIS SON TO STAND STILL AND HE OBEYED HIM. SOLOMON, ONE OF DAVIDS SONS, HAD 300 WIVES AND 700 PORCUPINES. MOSES DIED BEFORE HE EVER REACHED CANADA.

ADAIR HALL STAIRWELL RENOVATION

Many of us have worried about the sad state of the Adair Hall steps and landings. Now, the plan is in place to refurbish the stairwell with new terrazzo steps and landings. The Congregational Board has approved the renovation project and we are hoping to contract the work to be done this summer.

Since the total cost of \$12000 is well beyond our annual capital budget, the Board has decided to launch a special capital appeal to help fund the project. If you would like to support the project through a contribution to the capital fund, we have made available two ways to do it:

- Buy a step for \$250.00 (only 16 available!)
- Buy a piece of the landings by donating any amount you wish to contribute.

YES, I want to support the Adair Hall Stairwell project by:

___ buying a step at \$250

___ contributing an amount of \$_____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Envelope No. _____ Tel. _____

Please make your cheque out to Union Church Capital Fund and mark Adair Hall Stairwell on the memo line. Tax receipts will be given for all contributions over \$20 with name & address.

MAYBE NOT... A little girl became restless as the preacher's sermon dragged on and on. Finally, she leaned over to her mother and whispered, "Mommy, if we give him the money now, will she let us go?"