

MINISTER'S MESSAGE



I don't know why, but the wind chimes in my backyard often remind me of angel bells. Maybe it is because of the joyous sounds they make. Maybe it is because I don't usually expect them to ring, but they do it anyway especially in the strong winter breezes.

Those chimes often mean that there is a change in the weather. Something different is happening in our world. And when you think about it, that is the message of the Christmas angels.

Something different is happening: God has found a way to be with us, to make us part of the family. It might not have been the message the world was expecting, but there really is something wonderfully refreshing in the angels' song.

From the staff at Steveston United Church, we wish you the very best that Christmas 2002 has to offer. Joy to the World!

Rick Taylor

Rick Taylor – Minister

Irene Huan

Irene Huan – Director of Music

Joan Crich

Joan Crich – Wedding Coordinator

Suzi Petersen

Suzi Petersen – Office Secretary

Manuel Goncalves

Manuel Goncalves - Caretaker

THIS IS THE CHRISTMAS EDITION

of our church-wide newsletter. Your feedback would be greatly appreciated. The Easter edition of the newsletter will be in your hands on **Sunday, March 30, 2003**. We would like you to submit an article or personal news for the whole church family to read.

Deadline for submissions to the Easter Newsletter:
MONDAY, MARCH 17, 2003

Committee Chairs:

Deadline for submissions to the Annual Report:
FRIDAY, JANUARY 31, 2003

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November 2002



STEVESTON UNITED CHURCH
3720 Broadway St., Richmond, BC V7E 4Y8
Phone: 604-277-0508

Worship Services / Special Events

ADVENT / CHRISTMAS / EPIPHANY 2002 & 2003

Sunday, December 01 – 10:00 a.m.

First Sunday of Advent

Readings: Isaiah 64: 1-9 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

We will light the Candle of Hope.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated.

RICHMOND UNITED CHURCHES

Advent Choral Service

Sunday, December 01

7:00 p.m.

Two Mass Choir Anthems



Offering will be taken.

GILMORE PARK UNITED CHURCH
8060 No. 1 Road at Blundell

Sunday, December 08 – 10:00 a.m.

Second Sunday of Advent

Readings: Isaiah 40:1-11 Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 2 Peter 3:8-15(a) Mark 1:1-8

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

Our annual WHITE GIFT SERVICE. The congregation is asked to bring unwrapped toys and gifts for the needy. All gifts will be forwarded to the Richmond Christmas Bureau for distribution in our community. We will light the Candle of Peace.



TAIZÉ STYLE WORSHIP

(Prayer & Meditation)

Sunday, December 08 at 7:00 p.m.

In the Sanctuary – Come and light a Candle for Peace.



Sunday, December 15 – 10:00 a.m.

Third Sunday of Advent

Readings: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 Psalm 126 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

Our Sunday School Christmas Pageant

and

Congregational Pot Luck Luncheon

Our children will lead us. We will light the Candle of Joy.

The service will be followed by a Christmas Potluck Luncheon in the church hall.



HERITAGE 3R'S SCHOOL

Christmas Party & Open House

Friday, December 20, 2002

3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Students will be putting on a performance for your entertainment.

Refreshments will be served.

Everyone is welcome.



Sunday, December 22 – 10:00 a.m.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Readings: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Luke 1:47-55 Luke 1:26-38 Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

Romans 16:25-27

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

We will light the Candle of Love.

The Sacrament of Baptism will be celebrated.

Tuesday, December 24 – 7:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve at Steveston United Church

A service of carols and readings.

The Steveston United Church Choir will sing five Christmas Anthems.

We will light the CHRIST CANDLE – invite a friend.

Sunday, December 29 – 10:00 a.m.



First Sunday of the Christmas Season

Readings: Isaiah 61:10-62:3 Psalm 148 Galatians 4:4-7 Luke 2:22-40

Sermon: Leann Blackert, Pulpit Guest & Coordinator of Service

The last Sunday of 2002. Come and reflect on the past year and welcome the new!

Rev. Taylor will be taking a week's vacation beginning Friday, December 27, 2002.

He will be returning to the church office on Saturday, January 04, 2003.

In his absence, pastoral emergencies can be directed to Rev. Anna Christie at Gilmore Park United Church (office) 604-277-5377, (home) 604-805-5818

OR Rev. Gordon Verplank at South Arm United Church (office) 604-277-4020, (home) 604-538-0777.

DECEMBER 2002 / JANUARY 2003
~ Holiday Office Hours ~



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	open 9 - 1	closed	closed	closed	open 1 - 5	
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
	open 9 - 1	closed	closed	closed	open 1 - 5	

JANUARY 2003

Sunday, January 05 – 10:00 a.m.

Second Sunday After Christmas

Readings: Isaiah 60:1-6 Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 Ephesians 3:1-12 Matthew 2:1-12

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

The Coming of the Magi – The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated.

Sunday, January 12 – 10:00 a.m.

The Baptism of Jesus

Readings: Genesis 1:1-5 Psalm 29

Acts 19:1-7

Mark 1:4-11

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

A Moment for Christian Mission / Richmond Food Bank Rally

Please remember non-perishable food items.

TAIZÉ STYLE WORSHIP

Sunday, January 12 at 7:00 p.m.

In the Sanctuary



Sunday, January 19 – 10:00 a.m.

Second Sunday After Epiphany

Readings: 1 Samuel 3:1-10 Psalm :1-6, 13-18 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

John 1:43-51

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Begins.

Sunday, January 26 – 10:00 a.m.

Third Sunday After Epiphany

Readings: Jonah 3:1-15, 10 Psalm 62:5-12 1 Corinthians 7:29-31 Mark 1:14-20

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

The Sacrament of Baptism/ Reception of New Members.

Deadline for submissions to the Annual General Report

FRIDAY, JANUARY 31, 2003

Submissions may be left at the church office.

FEBRUARY 2003

Sunday, February 02 – 10:00 a.m.

Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

Readings: Deuteronomy 18:15-20 Psalm 117 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Mark 1:21-28

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

The Sacrament of Holy Communion.

Sunday, February 09 – 10:00 a.m.

Fifth Sunday After Epiphany

Readings: Isaiah 40:21-31 Psalm 147:1-11, 20 (c) 1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Mark 1:29-39

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

A Moment for Christian Mission /Richmond Food Bank Rally Sunday.

Don't forget your non-perishable food items.



VALENTINE'S TEA

In the church hall following the morning service.
This event is sponsored by the WALL Ladies. Join us!

TAIZÉ STYLE WORSHIP

Sunday, February 09 at 7:00 p.m.

In the Sanctuary

Prayer, Meditation, Candle Lighting.



Sunday, February 16 – 10:00 a.m.

Sixth Sunday After Epiphany

Readings: 2 Kings 5:1-14 Psalm 30 1 Corinthians 9:24-27
Mark 1:40-45

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

Annual Report is available.



TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2003 – 5:00 p.m.

Steveston United Church

will host Vancouver South Presbytery.

There will be 60+ people for Dinner

We'll need your help with setting up, serving & cleaning up.

Contact June Taylor for more details.

Sunday, February 23 – 10:00 a.m.

Seventh Sunday After Epiphany

Readings: Isaiah 43:18-25 Psalm 4 2 Corinthians 1:18-22 Mark 2:1-12

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

The Sacrament of Baptism/ Reception of New Members.

11:15 a.m.

Church Hall

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the congregation



Please bring your copy of the Annual Report
to this very important meeting.

Sunday, March 02 – 10:00 a.m.

Transfiguration Sunday

Readings: 2 Kings 2:1-12 Psalm 50:1-6
2 Corinthians 2:1-12 Mark 9:2-9

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Tuesday, March 04, 2003
SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPER
5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Adults: \$5.00 Children 10 & under: \$3.00



Wednesday, March 05, 2003
ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP SERVICE
7:00 p.m. at Gilmore Park United Church

(8060 No. 1 Road at Blundell)

Join us as we begin the journey to Easter.

Sunday, March 09 – 10:00 a.m.

First Sunday of Lent

Readings: Genesis 9:8-17 Psalm 25:1-10
1 Peter 3:18-22 Mark 1:9-15

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

*A Moment for Christian Mission / Richmond Food Bank Rally,
Don't forget non-perishable food items.*

TAIZÉ STYLE WORSHIP

Sunday, March 09, 2003 at 7:00 p.m.
In the Sanctuary – Prayer, Meditation, Candle Lighting.



Sunday, March 16 – 10:00 a.m.

Second Sunday of Lent

Readings: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16 Psalm 22, 23-31
Romans 4:13-25 Mark 8:31-38

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

Deadline for submissions to the Easter Congregational Newsletter

MONDAY, MARCH 17, 2003

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Sunday, March 23 – 10:00 a.m.

Third Sunday of Lent

Readings: Exodus 20:1-17 Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 1:18-25 John 2:13-22

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

Sacrament of Baptism / Reception of New Members.

Sunday, March 30 – 10:00 a.m.

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Readings: Numbers 21:4-9 Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
Ephesians 2:1-10 John 3:14-21

Sermon: Rev. Rick Taylor

The Easter Newsletter is available.

Report of the Unified Board



Your Board has been the beneficiary of the continuing dedicated and strenuous service of our Minister and friend, Rick Taylor, whose leadership in many of the temporal, as well as the spiritual areas of our Church life has enabled our Congregation to continue to function during a period in which several positions on the Board have remained unfilled since February of this year.

We need people to step forward to fill the positions of Chairperson and Envelope Secretary as well as others to provide backup for our Board Secretary and Treasurer where other demands on their time prevent the present holders of their positions from attending meetings. We also need a volunteer to be our permanent Lay Presbytery representative if we are to contribute to the broader Church community, whatever form that may take in the future.

We are all the beneficiaries of the work performed by Joan, Crich, George Lim and Rick Taylor in negotiating a contract with Heritage 3R's School for the use of some of the Church facilities. Thank you, Joan, George and Rick. We would be remiss in not mentioning the years of dedicated service of Beth White as Envelope Secretary, one of the many tasks undertaken by Beth in the life of our Congregation. Thank you, Beth. Who will step forward to fill that position?

There are many others who have worked tirelessly to do the chores associated with Church Boards and to do those things, big and small, to help our Congregation survive and contribute to the broader community. Our thanks to all.

The work of the Board will continue to require the time and efforts of all involved, as the financial realities of our situation, including building maintenance costs, become more pressing. However, it is our hope that despite these concerns, the greater efforts of our Congregation will continue to be directed to spiritual growth as individuals and as a community of faith within the broader community, remembering always that "Life is not a goblet to be drained but a measure to be filled."

Submitted by: Jack Bowers, Acting Chair, Unified Board

CHARITY BELL RINGERS

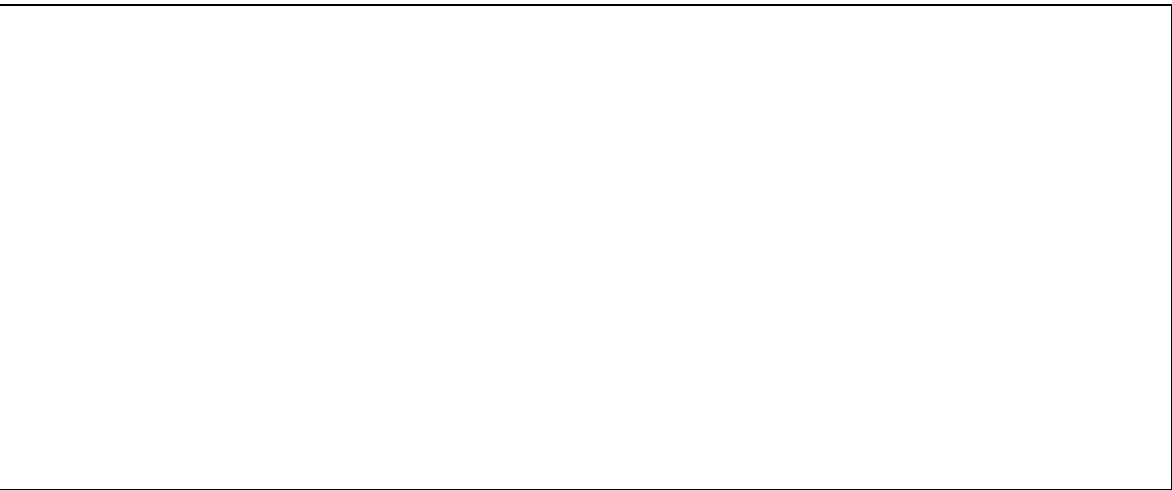


It is almost impossible to go to a supermarket these days, or a shopping mall without hearing someone at the door ringing a handbell, asking people to give money for folks in need.

Christmas is a good time to remember that God cared so much that our gracious God shared with us. The most famous verse in the Bible (John 3:16) says exactly that: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son."

Christmas bells remind us that, like our God, we too have the opportunity to care.....and to share.....so that others may feel God's love too.

Send in this envelope, or drop it on the offering plate at one of our Advent/Christmas services. Give a special Christmas gift for others in need through your church.



Advent Event

Saturday, November 30th
9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

South Arm United Church
(No. 3 Rd. & Steveston
Hwy.)

Cost: \$5.00 per child For Children ages 3 – 11

Invite your family & friends.

Come dressed as your favourite character from the Christmas story.

FEATURING: Singing & Stories with LINNEA GOOD
Return of Bug Theatre with Lady Cordelia Lady Bug
& Gregory Grasshopper
Stories, Crafts, Yummy Snacks & Lots of FUN!!!

For more info, contact Jen at 604-277-4020 or sauc_cy@telus.net.
Registration forms available on the bulletin board
near the church secretary's office.

Registration Deadline – Wednesday, November 27

A Heartfelt Thank You



*to the Christmas Bazaar Committee
for their countless hours of hard work
in planning & organizing this successful fundraiser.
We appreciate the local merchants
for their ongoing support with donations, and
the friends & family who faithfully
come out to enjoy our annual event.*

**"This is one of my favourite Christmas stories that I told to my Guides at campfire."
Evelyn MacDonald**

This is a story about Johnny and his mother.



Johnny
ritual every morning.

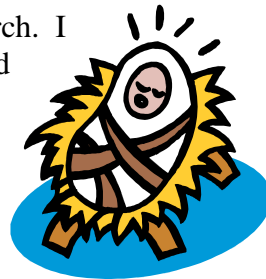
Every morning Johnny and his mother would get dressed and after breakfast they would go to the church. They would sit in the church for some time and after his mother said a prayer they would leave with going to school and his mother leaving for work. They followed this

One morning in December when they entered the church, Johnny looked around in wonder of the decorations in the church and over to one side of the alter, there was a nativity scene. There in the manger lay the baby Jesus and behind him stood Mary and Joseph – Jesus’ Mom and Dad.

Every morning Johnny’s mother said her prayers and Johnny would kneel beside the baby Jesus. On Christmas morning, the Reverend arrived at the church early as he wanted to have the church ready for the service. When he came to the nativity scene, there was no baby Jesus. The minister looked everywhere but could not find baby Jesus. He decided to borrow a doll and dress it in night clothes that would do just as well. The minister left the church to go to get the doll.

As the minister came down the church stairs, he looked up the street and there was Johnny running down the street as fast as he could pulling a red wagon. In the wagon was baby Jesus. The minister said to Johnny, “You know it’s a bad thing to steal from the church.”

Johnny looked very said and said, “Sir! I did not steal from the church. I promised baby Jesus, if I got a red wagon for Christmas that I would give Him the first ride in it. I was just bringing Him back to the church.”



A Reflection on Christ’s Birth



Angels have made a huge comeback in recent years. Hallmark and American Greetings now feature them prominently, though as demure, cuddly-looking creatures, not the type who would ever need to announce “Fear not!” The explicitly religious cards focus on the holy family, and you can tell at a glance these folks are different. They seem unruffled and serene. Bright gold halos, like crowns from another world, hover just above their heads.

The facts of Christmas, rhymed in carols, recited by children in church plays, illustrated on cards, have become so familiar that it is easy to miss the message behind the facts. After reading the birth stories, I ask myself, if Jesus came to reveal God to us, then what do I learn about God from that first Christmas?

Humility. The events of Christmas point to what seems like an oxymoron: a human God. The God who came to earth came not in a raging whirlwind nor in a devouring fire. Unimaginably, the Maker of all things shrank down so small as “to become an ovum, a single fertilized egg barely visible to the naked eye”. He “made himself nothing --- he humbled himself” said the apostle Paul more prosaically.

God’s visit to earth took place in an animal shelter with no attendants present and nowhere to lay the newborn King but a feed trough. Indeed the event that divided history and even our calendars into two parts may have had more animals than human witnesses. A mule could have stepped on him. “How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given.”

Approachable. Among people who walked off a separate sanctum for God in the temple, God made a surprise appearance as a baby in a manger. What can be less scary than a newborn with his limbs wrapped tight against his body? In Jesus, God found a way of relating to human beings that did not involve fear.

In truth, fear had never worked very well. The Old Testament includes far more low points than high ones. A new approach was needed, a New Covenant, to use the word of the bible, one that would not emphasize the vast gulf between God and humanity but instead would span it.

Courage. It took courage, for God to lay aside power and glory to take a place among human beings who would greet him with the same mixture of haughtiness and skepticism. It took courage to risk descent to a planet known for its clumsy violence,

along a race known for rejecting its prophets. What more foolhardy thing could God have done?

The first night in Bethlehem required courage as well. How did God, the Father feel that night helpless as any human father watching his son emerge into a cold world? Lines from two different Christmas carols play in my mind.....One – “The Little Lord, Jesus no crying he makes,” seems to me a sanitized version of what took place in Bethlehem. I imagine Jesus cried like any other baby the night he entered the world, a world that would give him much reason to cry as an adult. The second, a line from “O Little Town of Bethlehem”, seems as profoundly of all the world do rest on thee tonight”

“Alone of all creeds, Christianity has added courage to the virtues of the Creator” said G.K. Chesterton. The need for such courage began with Jesus’ first night on earth did not end until his last.

Submitted by: Irene Huan



WISH LIST

First United Church Mission

Food

Canned Soup, Beans, Fruit, Vegetables,
Pasta, Tomato Sauce, Fish, Meat
Jars of Peanut Butter, Jam
Dry Cereal, Pasta (400 grams), Noodles, Sauce, Rice,
Kraft Dinner



Men's Clothing

Jackets
Pants & Shirts
Shoes & Workboots
Underwear & Socks
Work Gloves



Toiletries

Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Dental Floss
Razors
Shampoo & Conditioner
Soap
Combs
Laundry Soap
Mending Kit



Promises to Keep

The United Church through the **M & S Fund** makes promises to partners within our church, across Canada, and around the world. They count on our support to keep churches open, to fund programs, to participate in advocacy work, to train ministers, to support outreach and development work.....to do all the things we do as The United Church of Canada in the world.

The **M & S Fund** needs \$30,500,000 to keep this year's promises.

Please help us reach that goal by December 31, 2002.

Please give generously to M & S today.

SHEPHERDS

The nights are long, aren't they shepherds? "Watching over your flocks by night." It can drag on and on.

So can life, as a shepherd. Generations of sheep may come and go, but your job remains pretty much the same. The days and nights go by.....and the weeks and months....and years. David, Bethlehem's most famous shepherd, did his shepherding ten centuries ago. It is a long time to wait.

But look! *BEHOLD!* Something new is taking place. An angel of the Lord with a message that, at long last, *THE WAITING IS OVER. THE LORD HAS COME!*

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ, the Lord" And this will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

The waiting is over, shepherds! *HURRY!* Go and see....and then *GO AND TELL. THINGS WILL SURELY NEVER BE THE SAME!*

