

A Message from Our Ministers

Dear Friends,

But you, beloved, are not in darkness
(1 Thessalonians 5:4)



Advent has great meaning to us during the increasing darkness of this season. Each week we light a candle symbolizing the coming celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, the One whom we call 'The Light of the World'. The light grows stronger week by week until all four candles are lit. On Christmas Eve, the Christ candle itself is lighted. Advent is a time of preparation – looking for the signs of Christ's presence in our midst as well as getting ready for the great festival of Christmas. The busy pace of our lives, however, tends to become even more frantic as we make ready for Christmas.

We are actually meant to slow down a little, and take time to hear the wonderful scriptures of prophecy of the One promised. The One whose birth we prepare for challenges and transforms our lives. This only happens, however, when we slow down and reflect on the meaning of Jesus' birth to each of us. For all other birthdays, we give a gift to the one who celebrates. Only for this birth, do we remember the injunction of our Lord: 'what you do for the least of these you do for me'. We honour Christ when we do something for someone else. There is great joy in this invitation – to bring the gift of joy to someone in need.

Advent marks the beginning of the Church Year. A new beginning. The new year will bring changes in our lives and in our Church. But why should we be afraid? The Lord we serve walks with us and, if we listen, directs our path. We are not alone in the dark but in the company of Jesus Christ whose light shines in us and for us.

Whether we feel excited, lonely or even sad during this special and holy season, God sends us joy. There is light in the darkness for all of us and the Light of the World is born again in our hearts.

We trust many of you enjoyed the Faith Development & Learning Event, when we learned more about the Dead Sea Scrolls and the context in which Jesus lived in the first century. It was a time of change and variety of religious thought and expression.

Our recent evening Study Sessions also enabled us to share a variety of points of view in our understanding of Jesus and the Church today. Thanks to all who gave their support and leadership.

As I continue to work with your Transition Team and Church Board for the future life of this congregation, I extend my deepest blessings for an Advent and Christmas that bring the Peace of God into your hearts and homes.

Let us especially remember in our prayers those who are serving overseas in difficult places and those from our Church family who prepare to leave for active duty.

The Lord bless and keep you all.

Angela

From Eileen's desk

As we prepare for the Advent Season and the celebration of the birth of Christ, I have been on a mental trip down memory lane. Memories of candle lighting through Advent as we wait to celebrate the Birth, of pageants and presentations, of special music and concerts; all in preparation and celebration. We are so blessed to be who we are, where we are and called to follow Jesus the Christ. Jesus is the Reason for the Season - a popular phrase for a few years and one we need to lift up and remember. Christ is central to who we are - let's celebrate. Let us pause and ponder, reach out and share, and follow the example so wonderfully set for us by Christ. Have a blessed Christmas.



Eileen

Confirmation

by: Eileen Hepplewhite & Heinz Burger

Four wonderful young women are preparing for Confirmation on 31st January 2010. This celebration will take place at the 10:30 a.m. service.

Please hold them in your prayers as they prepare to make their adult commitment to be members of our congregation.

We are blessed with so many gifts among the people of our congregation -- gifts used to share the message of the gospels.

Sunday Supper & Sharing

January 31st, February 14th & 28th
5:00-7:00 p.m

Theme: Dry Bones and New Life.

Supper will be served at 5:00 p.m. followed by a short time of worship.

Then we will separate to participate in a variety of activities including:

- A study on the Prophet Ezekiel led by Rev. Dr.

Don Boyd

- Children's drama programme: Dry Bones
- Parenting Question time



Watch for sign up sheets in the foyer.

Thoughts from the Chair of the Board

by: Bob Richards

God and Dog

A good friend sent me a link to what I thought was going to be just one of those 'cute' online video clips that I generally delete. But its title caught my attention, "God and Dog". I took a look and it struck a chord. I have copied some of the text below as well as a picture of 'dog'.

*They would stay with me all day
I'm the one who walks away.
But both of them just wait for me...
And dance at my return with glee.
Both love me no matter what
Divine God and canine mutt.
I take it hard each time I fail
But God forgives
Dog wags his tail.
I've seen love from both sides now.
It's everywhere...
Amen
Bow wow.*

In this Advent season I hope you can take some time out of the hustle and bustle to reflect on and to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. In the book we used in the fall study group led by Angela, Marcus Borg summarized for me the meaning of Jesus - "Here in Jesus I see more clearly than anywhere else what God is like".

Faith Development & Learning

I hope you were able to attend one of the two lectures on the Dead Sea Scrolls by Dr. Peter Flint. They were fascinating and were one of our initial steps to implement our new Faith Development & Learning vision approved by the congregation in May: "To support and lift up KUC through a renewed sense of mission centered on Faith Development and Learning. The objective is exploring and developing spiritual faith and learning to enable our faith to be lived in action."

The Transition Team and the Joint Needs and Assessment Committee (JNAC) are continuing their work to help us implement this vision. Included in this is the definition of a new model of Ministry for KUC which will outline Ministerial staffing and roles. Please look for more information on these activities in this newsletter and I encourage you to participate in this exciting discussion.



JNAC (Joint Needs Assessment Committee)

by: Robert Ashton, Chair

December... the season of Advent is upon us! For four weeks we will prepare for the coming of Christ - a time of expectation, anticipation and excitement!

"The Joint Needs Assessment Committee" (JNAC) was formed in the fall and continues to work towards making recommendations about the future ministry personnel needs of Kanata United Church. Our timeline is an aggressive one and will be in keeping with the Stepping Stones outlined by the Transition Team.

JNAC has been actively meeting as a group, reviewing documentation put forward by the Transition Team (along with the many inputs from congregational discussions), and consulting with committees and KUC staff. The JNAC report will be an important and key document in detailing the recommendations of ministry for KUC. Work has started on drafting our report that will be put forward to the congregation within the next few weeks.



The Transition Team has provided its views for a future model of ministry. JNAC will review and discern this recommendation and incorporate it into a format and model required for the JNAC report. This will form the basis of the JNAC report, which will include a recommendation that will be brought to the Board and the congregation for a vote.

We continue to value your thoughts and views. Please contact us at jnac@kuc.ca or speak with any of the JNAC



members: Lindsay Blue, Margaret Burman, Kathi Campbell, Rod Delcourt, Stephen Free, Don George, Susan Maslin, Helen Pinel, Maureen Purnell, Deepak Wanner and our dedicated Presbytery Representatives Bryan Giffin and Rev. Gordon Roberts.

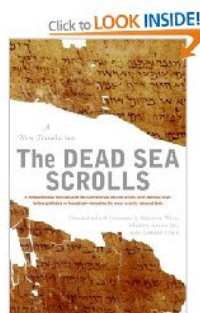
As 2009 draws to a close and 2010 dawns on a new decade, these are exciting times for KUC. Find the time to pause, reflect and celebrate with friends, family and our church community.

Transition Committee

by: Stephen Free, Chair

Born of A Virgin?

"**Born of a Virgin?**" is the title of one Chapter in the book "*The Meaning of Jesus - Two Visions*". This book - a respectful debate between two leading Christian theologians, N.T. Wright and Marcus J. Borg - was the subject of our own spirited discussions by members of KUC recently. On Nov. 13 and 14, we will have hosted the wider community at KUC to hear Dr. Peter Flint talk about the significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for the Bible/New Testament. These two examples reflect the congregation's decision in May to have an intentional focus on Faith Development and Learning within the life and work of our church. Your Transition Team will continue to support such events and work in the new year to facilitate ongoing discussions with the Board and the congregation on the goals we might set for ourselves as we explore more deeply what Faith Development and Learning means for each of us individually and as a church family.



The Transition Team has tabled its recommendations for a future model of ministry at KUC.

We recommend that KUC call one Full-time Lead Ordained Minister to provide overall leadership at KUC, with a focus on Worship, Faith Development and Learning and Pastoral Care. We recommend a part-time Diaconal or Designated Minister to provide leadership and direction in Faith Development and Learning for our children and youth and for our Reaching Out programmes (our faith-in action). We will need to continue to develop and enhance the involvement and skills of our Lay Leadership in the congregation's many programs and activities.

These recommendations fulfill our contribution to one of your specific goals for this time of intentional transition and Interim Ministry: "*the congregation will approve an appropriate model for future Christian ministry that will provide the necessary leadership to meet our emerging mission.*" It is the JNAC, through its report, that will present the final recommendations for decisions by the Board and the congregation on KUC's future model of ministry.

On the first day, God said, "*let there be light: and there was light*". In this season of Advent, your Transition Team joins with you in celebrating the coming of the birth of Jesus - the light of the world and in whom we know God.

Peace, Joy and Blessings.

Worship Committee

by: Lyn George, Chair



During this last year Angela introduced the Worship Committee, chapter by chapter, to Thomas Long's book, *Beyond the Worship Wars*. At our first meeting this September she provided us all with a concise list of Long's key characteristics of vital and faithful worship. These characteristics are valuable guidelines for worship here at Kanata United. They include making room for a sense of mystery in worship; showing hospitality to strangers; making visible a sense of drama in worship; emphasizing congregational music; adapting the environment of worship to make a sacred place; having a strong connection between worship and local mission; having a stable order of worship with recognizable responses; ending worship with a joyous experience; and having strong, inspiring ministers as worship leaders. The Committee will have all of these qualities in mind as we discuss worship during this transitional year.

Now as we prepare for the Christmas season please check on the *KUC Calendar of Services and Events* at the back of this newsletter for a list of all our services. Special services to note during Advent are Carols, Candles and Cookies on Sunday evening, Dec. 6th; the Service of Light and Hope on Wednesday, Dec. 9th and the CGIT Vesper Service on Wednesday, Dec. 16th. Remember that on Dec. 27th and on Jan. 3^d there will be only one Sunday morning service—at 10:30 a.m. On both those

Sundays there will be a **Family Worship Service** with optional childcare for children under 5 years of age.

As winter weather approaches the Worship Committee would like to remind all members of the congregation that if a Sunday morning service has to be cancelled at the last minute there are various ways that you can be informed before you leave home:

- ◆ there will be a notice on the Kanata United Church website (www.kuc.ca)
- ◆ the phone message at the church will reflect the cancellation (613-592-5834)
- ◆ radio station CFRA will have the announcement as early as possible

We all earnestly hope that we will not have to implement this plan, but if you are in any doubt, please check.