

# *Anna's Letter*

## **"God Is God" by Steve Earle**

I believe in prophecy.  
Some folks see things not everybody can see.  
And, once in a while, they pass the secret along to you and me.

And I believe in miracles.  
Something sacred burning in every bush and tree.  
We can all learn to sing the songs the angels sing.

Yeah, I believe in God, and God ain't me.

I've traveled around the world,  
Stood on mighty mountains and gazed across the wilderness.  
Never seen a line in the sand or a diamond in the dust.

And as our fate unfurls,  
Every day that passes I'm sure about a little bit less.  
Even my money keeps telling me it's God I need to trust.

And I believe in God, but God ain't us.

God, in my little understanding, don't care what name I call.  
Whether or not I believe doesn't matter at all.

I receive the blessings.  
That every day on Earth's another chance to get it right.  
Let this little light of mine shine and rage against the night.

Just another lesson  
Maybe someone's watching and wondering what I got.  
Maybe this is why I'm here on Earth, and maybe not.

But I believe in God, and God is God.

Recently I was listening to the new album by musician Steve Earle and was struck by the lyrics to this song, "God is God." While Earle isn't a 'Christian musician' there is religious imagery and theological topics in much of his stuff. For instance one of his past albums is entitled, "Dust to Dust." Listening to this new song I couldn't help but think about all the places we find 'theology' and 'spirituality' in our culture today.

As far as I can tell, in this song "God is God" Steve Earle is basically putting forth his own creed or statement of belief. In a very humble and straightforward ways he is putting himself out there saying "I believe." Yes, every day that passes he's sure about a little bit less, but nevertheless, he believes.



As a Christian community we need to be open to listening for the beliefs and the creeds of those around us. If the Church is going to flourish in this new age it's time to stop requiring people to sign on to our historic creeds as a pre-requisite for inclusion. Instead, we need to be in conversation with people about what their working assumptions or beliefs are. What is their personal creed at this point in their lives? Only after we have truly listened to who they are and where they are at, and shared a bit of who we are and where we are, is it helpful to look at the historic creeds of the church.

When Doug Pagitt was at St. Laurence this past May he spoke about Evangelism in the Inventive Age. He suggested that his own view on evangelism was deeply changed by his family's experience of adopting two young boys into their family of four. As they took these two-school aged boys into their family it wasn't a question of simply teaching the boys about the Pagitt family, but about an on-going two-way conversation between the Pagitts and the boys so that a new family of six emerged.

Churches needs to have a similar approach. When an individual comes to our church and expresses an interest in 'joining,' how can we have a conversation with them so that both parties are transformed. The family or community of St. Laurence must always be willing to grow both in numbers of people but, more importantly, in breadth and diversity. We must always work to be a community of believers who are in lively conversation with God and one another about our particular beliefs and practices.

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There is lots of excellent information about upcoming events at St. Laurence in this newsletter. **Sunday School, Nursery and Youth Group will all resume on Sunday, September 11.**

I'd also ask that you all take the time to read Melanie Jantzie's update in her positions both as warden and as chair of the Project Committee. At the end of July the committee decided that we would be better served by finding a new architecture firm to complete the construction drawings. We will take the concept and design that was approved by the parish and ask a new firm to take us through construction drawings and get us ready to tender the project to contractors. Many thanks to Melanie Jantzie for all her work as chair of the Project Committee. Melanie is very wisely and carefully leading us through the challenges of this undertaking. We are also very much indebted to Herman Bell in his role as chair of the Diocesan Architecture Committee. The advice and assistance has provided has been invaluable.

I realise that many would have liked to have seen us get going on this project this past summer. However, we need to do our due diligence and ensure that the scope and budget of the project matches the money we have on hand to pay for the project. Many thanks to all of you who have given and pledged to this project. The more pledges come in the more quickly we will be in a position to sign contracts and shovels in the ground.

## Warden's Report I

*Melanie*

Thank you to all who have been on the road this summer, and have been so welcoming to our visitors. We have not had a Vestry meeting since the last leader but there have been some significant developments in the project as explained below.

### Project Update

The Project Committee had a meeting on Monday July 25<sup>th</sup> to review our current status and discuss continuing our relationship with Omicron. After reviewing both the Project Brief and the Class B budget we unanimously decided not to continue using this organization. A recommendation was made to the Corporation and the Corporation subsequently approved the recommendation.

An email was sent to Omicron informing them that we are no longer going to be using their services. We have been consistently been let down by Omicron on mutually agreed upon deadlines, which was the main reasoning behind letting them go. We also felt that there were significant omissions in the Omicron Project Brief that would result in significant costs over the course of the project.

The Project Committee will work to choose a new architect firm over the coming weeks. The parish does own the concept that we presented and can take the concept to another firm to prepare construction drawings. We will be going to 2 to 3 other firms to evaluate their ability to execute and if there is a fit between St Laurence and each given firm. We view the relationship between the architect and the Project Committee as critical to the project's overall success.

If you have feedback for the committee or any questions at all, please don't hesitate to ask.

## Warden's Report II

*Linda*

The summer has flown by so quickly. Thanks to Don's capable administration there were no crises. Anna had a great holiday and is now looking rested and ready to handle any problem we throw at her. Thanks to everyone for attending the services at St. Martins and St. Stephens. Both events were a great success. We were pleased to be able to reciprocate by hosting the St. Martins crowd on July 31<sup>st</sup>.

# Financial Reports

*Steve, Parish Treasurer*

In the last issue of the Leader I introduced the new accounting system that St. Laurence is now using (PowerChurch) and compared the 2010 year-end reports from the new system to the same reports from the old system. This article will look at the June 30, 2011 financial report (included on a separate page of this Leader).



As explained previously, the accounting records are now divided into five different funds – Operating fund, Capital fund, Outreach Activities fund, Special Activities fund and the Wisdom Centre fund. The first part of the financial report contains a summarized balance sheet for each of these funds with a total for all funds combined. For example, total assets in the Operating Fund amounted to \$29,764, which was made up of \$272 set aside for the One Body Youth program and \$29,492 of unrestricted assets. Similarly, in the Wisdom Centre fund, total assets amounted to \$22,081, which was partially offset by liabilities of \$6,292 (mostly accounts payable) leaving \$15,789 that was being held for the Wisdom Centre operations.

The next section of the financial report is the income statement for the Operating fund. This part of the report contains six columns of numbers. The first column (“Jan to Jun Actual”) is the actual amount for each of the lines for the period of the report (in this case, the first six months of 2011). The second column (“Pro-rated Budget”) contains a straight-line proration of the annual budget over the period of the report. The third column (“Variance”) is the difference between the first two columns. The fourth column (“Pro-rated Prior Year”) is a straight-line proration of the previous year’s amount (in this case, 2010) over the period of the report. The fifth column (“Comparison”) is the difference between the first column and the fourth column. And finally the sixth column is simply the total annual budget.

Thus, for example, the envelope collections amount for the first six months of the year was \$96,758. This is \$742 less than the six-month budget amount of \$97,500 and \$1,071 more than half the previous year’s envelope collections. Correspondingly, the six-month total expense amount of \$119,487 is \$12,319 more than half the annual budgeted expense amount and \$11,060 more than half the 2010 total expenses.

The final section of the financial report is the income statement for the Capital fund. It simply shows the income and expense for the major categories in the Capital fund for the current year and the previous year with a combined total. Thus, for example, donations received in the capital fund amounted to \$117,394 in 2011 and \$392,025 in 2010 for a combined total of \$509,419. Also, when the total expenses for the first six months of 2011 (\$8,240) are combined with the total expenses for 2010 (\$32,497), the result is \$40,737.

As always, please contact me if you have any questions or comments about this new format for the St. Laurence financial reports. It is expected that this report will be produced on a quarterly basis.



## Spiritual Development Committee

Lillian

### Spiritual Practices

A lively Soul Food service took place on June 5<sup>th</sup> supported by the music of Rev. Brian Pearson's band from St. Stephens.

Over the next year the focus of the Spiritual Practice newsletters and many of the worship services will include various aspects of the spiritual practice of prayer. This includes body prayer, intercessory prayer and prayer as writing.

Other plans for the fall Conversations time and worship services include a focus on the gospel of Mary Magdalene and an exploration of Karen Armstrong's recent book titled *Twelve Steps for a Compassionate Life*. There are plans for a service dedicated to environmental issues including a mass for healing of the earth.

### Yoga and Christian Meditation

A gentle Yoga and Christian Meditation session led by Gayle Andrews will be held on Saturday, October 29<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 to 11:30 am.

### Men's Gathering

In follow-up to the two gatherings last year, a men's night will be organized in the fall by Al Rallison.

### Inclusive Language

The committee has been discussing a variety of ways to continue to use inclusive language in our worship services.

### Christian Meditation/ Contemplative Prayer

Contemplative prayer services will continue in the fall on the fourth Monday of every month at 7:30 pm and the first and third Thursdays of the month at 9:30 am.

### Library

Several new books have been added to the St. Laurence library collection. Please feel free to browse after church and sign something out. Contact Spencer Stevens or Barb Brydges if you have questions about the library.

### Summer Solstice Labyrinth

We were once again invited to join the people of the Church of the Good Shepherd to walk the outdoor labyrinth located in their churchyard in the community of Wildwood. This has become an annual event to share in a walking meditation.

### Wisdom Centre

Rev. Don Postema gave a presentation on June 9<sup>th</sup> at River Park Church on the topic of *Appreciating God's Gifts in other Religious Faiths without Losing our own*.

Barbara Brown Taylor, author of *An Altar in the World* will be at Christ Church on December 2-4 for a workshop on sacred darkness.

Rita Nakashima Brock will be visiting on May 3 and 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012 to lead a workshop on *Saving Paradise on Earth: Faith for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. A study will be held prior to this event about theories of Atonement.

Check out the Wisdom Centre website for more details of upcoming events, [www.stlaurence.ca](http://www.stlaurence.ca).

### Our Annual Harvest Festival will be celebrated on Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup>.

Please join us for lunch. Turkey sandwiches, salads and pie will be served. Sign-up sheets will be available in the downstairs hall; please help by volunteering to bring whatever you are able.



## Choir Fall Start-Up!

The first choir practice of the fall season will be Thursday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m.

Our first musical project will be preparing for the Mass for the Healing of the Earth on Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>. (See separate item in this Leader.)

If you are interested in singing with us for that service (or longer!), please speak to me on Sunday or call me at 403-246-6165 (or just come to practice).

Deb Music  
Director



## Upcoming Events for OneBody

*Jill*

### **Volunteers Needed!**

Every year our city hosts a great event called GlobalFest. It's a weeklong celebration that includes an evening fireworks show. Our youth and their families are invited to volunteer as the DG Crew (Dangerous Goods Crew) where we work together to pick up firework debris at the end of the night. Volunteering at this event raises a large chunk of money for OneBody and includes VIP parking passes and tickets for GlobalFest. Please let Jill ([onebodyyouth@gmail.com](mailto:onebodyyouth@gmail.com)) know if you are interested in volunteering this year. The following nights are available: August 19, 21, 23, 25, 27. They fill up quick!



### **OneBody Kick-Off BBQ/Potluck**

Join us on Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup> for our annual youth kick-off bbq. Yes, there will probably be a photo scavenger hunt...but this year will be even more EPIC. This event takes place from 12pm – 3pm at St. Laurence (5940 Lakeview Dr. SW). We will provide the burgers/buns – youthlings provide the sides/dessert. See you at the kick-off!!!

### **Manna – Diocesan Youth Gathering**

This is our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Diocesan Youth Gathering and it's only going to get better and better. This event costs \$10 and takes place at Christ Church on Saturday,

September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011 from 10am – 5pm. There will be worship, workshops, food and other special surprises. Please register with Jill (onebodyyouth@gmail.com).

### **Youth Drop-In at Knox**

Nothing to do afterschool? Hop on the bus and join Chad and Jill at Knox (3704 37<sup>th</sup> St. SW) for food and hang-out times. We'll be there from 3:30pm-6:00pm every Tuesday, all year.

### **Grade 4, 5, 6 OneBody!?**

That's right! We're trying something new this year. If you have a preteen youthling in Grade's 4, 5 or 6, have them join us for a special youth night on the last Sunday of the month at Good Shepherd (408 38 Street SW) from 4-6pm. The first one happens Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Contact onebodyyouth@gmail.com for more information and upcoming events.

### **OneBody Family Retreat**

We are headed back out to Canmore for an exciting weekend of family events. This weekend-long event is meant for all members of the youthling's family and costs only \$25/family-member, plus lodging. Write the dates on your calendar (Sept 30-Oct 2) and watch for more details to come!



**Sunday School, Nursery and Youth Group will all resume on Sunday, September 11.**

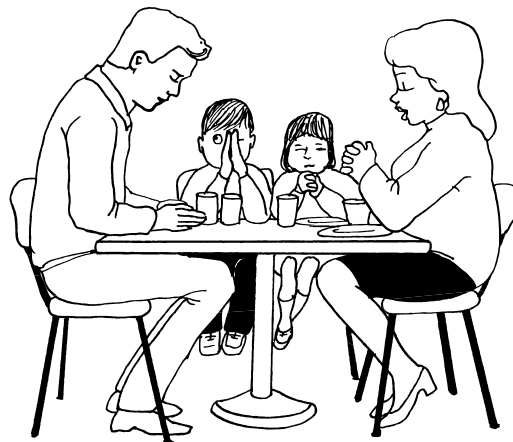
## Raising a Faith-Filled Family

Friday October 28th:

An event for families hosted by Christ Church Family dinner/workshop; dinner 6.00-6.30 (optional and child friendly for those coming straight from work); workshop 6.30-8.00 p.m.

Cost: \$45 per family (includes dinner and childcare) - we hope couples will take advantage of this opportunity to come together. To register please call Christ Church at 403-243-4680.

When families spend time together, build healthy relationships with one another, share meals, and solve conflicts and reconcile with one another, they grow not only in well-being, but also in faith. This session will show parents, grandparents, and others a four-step process for recognizing how God lingers in the creases and folds of the ordinary *and extraordinary* events of their family life.



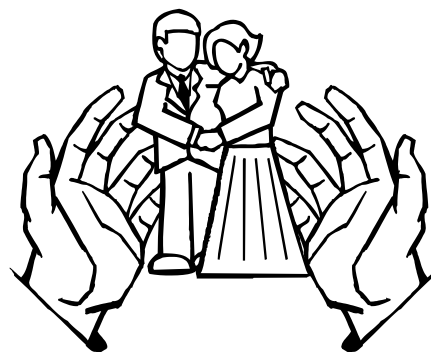
Participants will also learn practical, doable ways to pray, celebrate, reconcile, and serve as a family. By exploring the holy and sacred nature of everyday family living, parents will see new ways to nurture their children's and teens' faith growth using research-based, proven methods, and create a vision for growing in faith as a family.

This workshop will be led by Leif Kehrwald. Leif has worked in family ministry and faith formation on the parish, diocesan, and national levels for over twenty-five years. Currently he serves as Team Leader for Vibrant Faith@Home, a division of Vibrant Faith Ministries. Leif has published several books and numerous articles on family life, family ministry, marriage, and youth ministry. His latest publication is *The Catholic Faith and Family Bible*, for which he served as general editor, published by HarperCollins, 2010.

Leif has taught courses on family ministry, parish partnership and family spirituality at Dominican University (Chicago), Loyola University (Chicago), University of Dayton and Mount Angel Seminary in Oregon. He received the 1992 National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers Award for "serving as a voice and advocate for families and family ministry." He travels frequently throughout the country offering presentations and workshops on family faith development.

Leif and his wife, Rene, have two young adult sons and live in Portland, Oregon. More information at <http://vibrantfaithathome.net/about/>

The deadline for the Winter Edition of the Leader is Tuesday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>



## Stephen Ministry – Caring for our Community

Carol

We have many needs for care in our congregation and community, people experiencing divorce, grief, hospitalization, loneliness and many other stresses and challenges. Often people with needs suffer silently or do not request or receive the level or care they really need. It is impossible for our clergy and even the pastoral team to meet all these needs. Stephen Ministry expands the care St. Laurence can offer by equipping members to provide Christian care. This gives a larger pool of people with the gifts, skills and calling to bring Christ's love and care to those who need it.

Stephen ministry is based on the idea that all Christians are ministers. The responsibility for passing on God's love is for all of us. God has given us all gifts to use in this way. The care receivers are blessed by the relationship, but even more so the caregivers are richly blessed as a result of the bond that develops. As we read in Matthew 25:40, "...I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."

Classes will commence in January 2012. For further information please call or Carol @ 253-4221 or Anna.

## Praying Our Poems: a Poetry Workshop by Stuart Ian McKay

All that poetry invites and magnifies is vitally interesting to those who love God. Poetry reminds us that it is more than words on a page, it is spirit too. As with prayer, the work of poetry is never harsh or terrifying, but expands the parts of ourselves that speak to eternity.

On Saturday, October 22, 2011 I will lead a full day poetry workshop at St. Laurence Anglican Church in Calgary. The workshop begins at 10:00 am and runs until 4:00 pm. The main goal of the workshop is to bind the process of writing poetry to spiritual awareness. We will focus on several key questions as well. How are our poetical concerns and artistic lives spiritual? Are our poems a leading of God's Spirit? Where do our poems lead us?

"Praying Our Poems" will not overwhelm students with writing activities. Instead, it will explore several key methods of writing poetry. Past students have asked me to include "physical" writing exercises in my lessons. A guided reading/writing exercise followed by a walking meditation will be a primary activity. A specific work of art and a piece of music will aid the meditation. Students always have plenty of private writing time in my workshops, as well as one on one critique sessions with the instructor.

Students should bring three personally meaningful items to the workshop. Photographs, small mementos and even poems are ideal. Each item anchors ideas, language and imagery for our three page in-class poetry project. Also, these items relate to questions and concepts we will bring up during the day. For example, what can a student's choice of item reveal about the spiritual nature of his/her poetry? Learning how and when to finish a line and

a poem is a major part of what we will examine. As an act of faith, we must learn how and when to abandon our work, first to God, then to each other and finally to ourselves. Together, we may discover what this act of abandonment does to us as poets and as lovers of God.

This workshop extends beyond the classroom. I invite students to give me their three page in-class poetry project at the end of the workshop or mail it to me for a full and thorough review.



"Praying Our Poems" has a limit of ten students. Interested students who wish to register after this workshop has been filled will be put on a waiting list for a future workshop. The cost for the full day workshop and manuscript review is \$100. Please register by October 15 by calling St. Laurence at 404-249-6184.

Please bring your own lunch. Coffee and tea is provided.

Stuart Ian McKay is a member of the Writers Guild of Alberta and the League of Canadian Poets. His first book, *Stele of Several Ladies* – a long poem – was published in 2005. He lives, writes and teaches in Calgary. Stuart is a parishioner of St. Laurence.

### Close Poetry

Close Poetry: A study group to explore the life-affirming joys of contemporary poetry through careful reading, and reading aloud.

Join poet and speech teacher, Juleta Severson-Baker for a 3-week immersion in the spiritual riches of contemporary poetry.

Learn how to engage more fully with a poem in order to discover the soulful meanings within and maximize your understanding of the art form. Also practice some technique for reading poetry aloud. This series is open to everyone; poetry lovers, writers, and those with poetry phobia alike! All sessions will take place at St. Laurence Anglican church in Lakeview and run Wednesdays 7:30-9pm November 9-23. Participants will be asked to purchase "Staying Alive; Real Poems for Unreal Times", an anthology compiled by editor Neil Astley and published by Miramax/Hyperion (approx. \$22).

Registration fee - \$30 (to be donated towards a fund to bring American poet Marcia Falk to the Banff Centre in 2012 where she will mentor Juleta through the writing of a suite of new prayer/poems for worship). To register please call the office at 403-249-6184.

## R.A.V.E.

(Recognize...Affirm...Value...Encourage)

Alice has been a big supporter of St. Laurence for many years. Recently she donated five more of her paintings to the church. Her works of art now hang in the church office, the Rector's office, the Sunshine Room and the gathering room downstairs by the library.

Alice mainly paints landscape scenes which reflect our Alberta environment. She has more paintings at home available for sale. Hung on the church's walls, the paintings she donated bring added life to the church's décor.

**Thank you, Alice!**

## Retiring

Arnold and Mary Wright retired as Building Superintendents on June 30<sup>th</sup>. **A huge thank you to both of them for the countless hours they have put into keeping this place on track over the past many years!** It is time for them to retire and for the rest of us to stop looking to them to replace light bulbs, tidy up, etc. Please clean up after yourselves at the church, and particularly in the kitchen, just as you do in your other home. There will soon be some helpful notices posted in the kitchen to help you remember what needs to be done.

Phil Crowe will be taking over the position but we're looking for additional people who can help out. Please be in touch with Anna or Phil if you are willing and able.

## Fairtrade Sale Dates Have Changed

*Carol*



Fairtrade items are usually available in October and December; however, this Fall the dates have both changed.

Please note:

First date: September 11, 2011

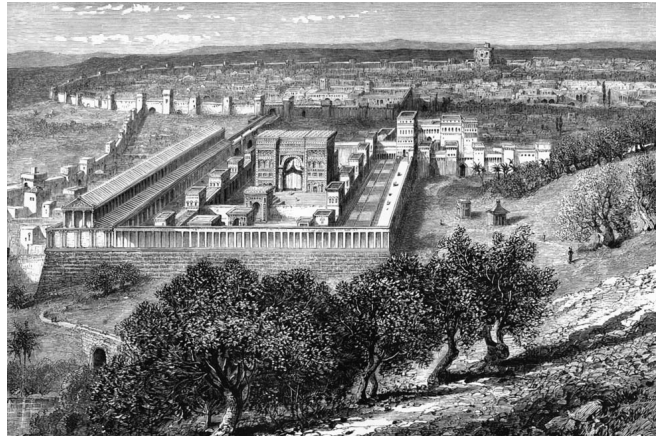
Second date: November 27, 2011

Thank you for your understanding!

## A Spiritual Journey to the Lands of the Bible

You're invited to join Anna, Vic and Suzanne on a Rostad tour, Spiritual Journey to the Lands of the Bible from February 26<sup>th</sup> to March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Anna and Vic customized the itinerary to include the most interesting sights and meaningful experiences to enrich our faith and make faraway places and events in the Bible come alive.

Our tour begins in Israel, where we have the opportunity to visit the Mount of Beatitudes where Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount, travel to Nazareth and explore the recently opened Nazareth Village, and ride a boat across the Sea of Galilee to Capernaum where Jesus spent many years preaching. During our four days in Jerusalem we worship at St George's Anglican Cathedral, visit the Western Wall, walk through the Garden of Gethsemane, travel the Way of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa as well as visit the nearby cities of Jericho and Bethlehem. Before leaving Israel, any of us with sore muscles will be able to soothe them by floating on the Dead Sea!



The Temple and Jerusalem

Then we cross the border into Jordan stopping at Mount Nebo where Moses looked across to the Promised Land and continue to Petra, a remarkable rose coloured city with buildings carved from sandstone. With two days in Petra the more adventurous will have the opportunity to climb and explore to their hearts' content. As we leave Jordan we travel one of the most stunning desert-scapes in the world and enjoy a four wheel drive excursion across the desert.

Travelling into Egypt, we will pause for a free day at a resort in Taba, then continue across the Sinai Peninsula to Ste. Catherine's Monastery originally built in 527AD. At sunset we have the opportunity to climb to the top of Mount Sinai and take in the amazing view. After passing under the Suez Canal we enter Cairo for the last 4 days of our tour. Highlights include the Egyptian Museum with contents from King Tutankhamen's tomb, visiting Coptic Cairo, Cheops's Pyramid and the Sphinx, a Nile luncheon cruise and for the shoppers - a visit to the famous Khalili Bazaar.

The pace will be relaxed, with time for reflection and "conversations". The tour price includes all transportation and fuel surcharges, accommodation, gratuities, entrances, visas, taxes, breakfasts and dinners, and most lunches. For more information or a brochure with all the details please contact Anna, Suzanne or Vic.

Why not consider joining us on an amazing spiritual journey to the lands of the Bible!

## *Mass for the Healing of the Earth*

By Jim, Jean, & Michael Strathdee

This fall, everyone is encouraged and invited to participate in a unique service of thanksgiving for all creation that will be held on the first Sunday in October. In addition to special music there will be dancing and story-telling as part of the service. There is a part for

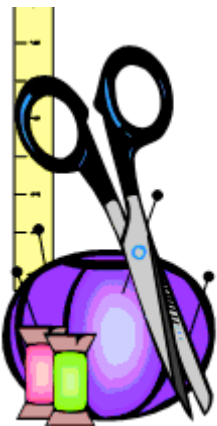
## Craft Group

*Mary*

Start-up day for the Craft Group will be **Wednesday, September 14<sup>th</sup>**.

Come with fresh enthusiasm and ideas so we can plan for an enjoyable, interesting and productive year.

We welcome, in fact, encourage new members. We meet on Wednesdays at noon. Bring a sandwich (other goodies provided) and enjoy an afternoon of fellowship and creativity,



## Works of Mercy and Justice: Our Adopted Family

Martha

About Natalya and Emily: The friendship for which St Laurence is well known is really important to Natalya and Emily. If you have not spent time with them, please do so.



Natalya emigrated from the Ukraine over 3 years ago with baby Emily. Since arriving life has been a challenge with financial issues causing continued stress. At this time she is working in retail but only able to work when Emily is in day-care. We are hoping to help her establish a housecleaning business which

will enable her to financially support herself and her daughter.

During the school year Natalya can be found on Sunday mornings tending the nursery downstairs. Natalya celebrates her birthday in early September and what she wants more than anything is financial independence for her and Emily.

Emily will be five in September. She was baptised at St Laurence and now attends Sunday school. She is a lovely child and anxious to start kindergarten at Connaught School, a 7 minute walk from their apartment. For her birthday on September 28th she would like a bicycle and a yoyo. We should all get to know the family and treasure their presence as a reminder of our Christian obligation to those in need. May we all be truly thankful for all the blessings in our lives.

## Works of Mercy and Justice: The Calgary Interfaith Food Bank and the Calgary Drop-In Centre

Art

The **Calgary Interfaith Food Bank** (CIFB) recognized St. Laurence Church for five years of service and gave us a Certificate of Appreciation. Eleven of our Friday Morning Volunteer Roster members and four wives attended the excellent Volunteer Appreciation and Long Service Recognition Dinner on May 12, 2011, and accepted the Certificate which is on the bulletin board.

The CIFB is a massive organization and last year 140,442 Calgarians received food through their Emergency Food Hamper Program. More than 56,000 of their clients were children. The average cost of an Emergency Food Hamper (1 week of nutritional food), for a family of four was \$120.00.

Lately the CIFB seems to have been low on food, so I urge the St. Laurence parishioners to remember "Food Bank Sunday", the last Sunday of the month. They are again accepting egg cartons, except plastic, along with canned food, and of course money – for which you can get a tax receipt. The CIFB very much appreciates our Friday morning 3 to 5 volunteers. Special thanks to "regulars" Yvonne and Jack Krieger.

At the present time our "Calgary Inter-Faith Food Bank Friday Morning Volunteer Roster" has 24 active members, including 4 men from St. Martin's and 3 "outsiders". If you would like to volunteer or want more information please call Art Yeske at 403-249-7245.

My records indicated that the “St. Laurence Anglican Church Larry’s Grill Duty Roster Drop-In Centre Food Bank Run” was started in January 1999 when we used to go to the **Calgary Drop-In Centre** (CDIC) and pick up their van and drive to the Food Bank and load the van with food and return to CDIC. However, Reg Harrill and Bill Snowdon assure me that it started earlier, probably between 1990 and 1995 by Norm Elsey, a former St. Laurence member. (Maureen Elsey was President of the CDIC Board in 1995.) In 2003 we started only loading food onto pallets at the Food bank for the CDIC, and the CDIC would send their van and their driver to bring the food back to the Drop-In Centre. In 2006 the “reliable” men of St. Laurence were promoted to the Production Area of the Calgary Inter-Faith Food Bank where we have been sorting food or filling bags or hampers ever since.

The Calgary Drop-In Centre Society has been “Helping People In Need Since 1961”. They just celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. They have a new building in addition to the old building that we used to visit up to 2003. St. Laurence, through Laurie Mummery at the present time, still supplies sandwiches to the CDIC once a month. Barb and Mike Maddocks did that for 16 years before Laurie.

If any men or women are interested in seeing CDIC facilities, Bill Snowdon at 403-249-8602 would be happy to organize a tour for a group or two.

Proceeds from the Special  
Thanksgiving Offering  
Envelopes enclosed in the  
Leader are designated for the  
PWRDF

## Theological Triflings of a Layman Including All

Dave

Our principles and the order in which we hold them influence the things we do and shape our future. Consider an imaginary man who operates on the following two simple principles in the order given: first to act in the best long term interests of his family, and second, to feed his family. He probably wouldn’t go out and steal a loaf of bread because that would violate the first of his two principles. However, if he reverses their precedence or exclusively picks the second, he may well consider moving in a compromising direction with foreseeable consequences.

Like the imaginary man, the Church with its many concerns and noble, caring instinct has to be careful how it manages its principles. It knows from the course of its history that an indiscriminate wielding of one principle to the exclusion of others can land it in potentially conflicted positions. This comes to mind in some implementations of “inclusive language” that change the language of Scripture and Worship by the selective substitution or removal of certain words and ideas.

To give an example, Priests for Equality, placing a preeminent value on inclusiveness and equality, have created *The Inclusive Bible* and *The Inclusive New Testament*. In them, they selectively retranslate Scripture where they disagree with the original texts, substituting self described re-imaginings to convey their own modern intent. This approach contrasts with that of conventional translators who, valuing accuracy of meaning, use modern words to convey original intent.

The kind of debate set up by these differing approaches seems similar in some respects to recent secular controversies over the use of certain words in the fictional works of Twain and Shakespeare. Where it differs though is in the Church's sacred perpetual obligation to guard and communicate eternal truth. It is in this key regard that the two sides, armed with narrowly selected principles, threaten to fracture the Church.

Ironically, hope for reconciliation comes on the bracing winds of hypocrisy as they winnow out the positions of all those who would wield their principles indiscriminately. After all, can promoters of inclusiveness really tolerate excluding those with conventional principles? Can those who cleave to Scriptural intention, with its clear calls to unity, easily tolerate separation?

What appears to be a choice between inclusive and traditional language might more usefully be framed as a challenge to find better ways of communicating the Church's eternal truths to an evolving world. If so, it's a challenge that comes with an opportunity for growth to those willing to create paths broad enough for all with genuine concerns who want to walk together.

Churches like St. Laurence could choose to intentionally think through common principles and their precedence before acting. We could distinguish between critical elements of the Faith and critical elements of effective communication. In so doing we could also foster a humility that can only come from maintaining a balance between respect for history, the inspired Word and that Word's great caveat, "I have much more to tell you".

Embarking on that kind of path, with clear and *mutually inclusive* intentions, would lead to the coherent expression of our

historical faith in the vernacular of the times. It might even fulfil our obligation to see an intact faith in Christ, who is the same yesterday, today and forever, passed to future generations.

The language we use in prayer and worship reflects what we believe. How we get to that language reflects who we are. The principles underlying both will go a long way to determining not just the longevity and relevance of this parish and the Church, but the value of faith in the lives of our children and theirs.

## Makes You Think, Eh?

Wayne

"The problems (of our current times) can only be tackled by taking on the culture of materialism and the accompanying erosion of community." (Bill McKibben, *Hope, Human and Wild*, 1995).

This quote from one who has been reporting on the state of nature for many years has me thinking. Thinking not only about the impact of a single-minded devotion to the accumulation of material goods but also about the connection McKibben makes to its impact on community.

First things first (not necessarily my normal approach but relevant here). Some years ago, a Canadian writer pointed out that it is ludicrous to expect an ever expanding human economy in a planet with finite resources (Stan Rowe, *Home Place*). Undaunted by such an obvious insight, we continue to project continuous growth even as we admit that certain resources are in decline (for example, peak oil was reached a few years ago). I think of the promises of those seeking to govern ("continued economic growth" and not much else).

The “culture of materialism” affects us in so many ways. We gather lots of stuff and, in the extreme, conclude that it is entirely of our own doing (“I worked hard for this and I deserve it”). We rail against taxes at the same time as we complain that our streets are covered with snow. We hear of poverty but are not directly affected (“that is over there”). We hear of clear cut forests, lament, and continue to discard used lumber.

So what about this insight that materialism and community strength are negatively correlated (as one grows in strength, the other declines)? There is lots of evidence that our sense of community has suffered as people become more isolated, more concerned about themselves and less caring of others. Those with adequate wealth abandon their home community as often as they can (“I’ve just got to get away from the stress of the city”). Their connection to community (both their home and their ‘away’ places) is naturally broken along with their knowledge of issues and their involvement on behalf of those in need. The logic is apparent- interesting and thought stimulating.

Where to start to tackle the problems? If McKibben is right, we must either “take on” materialism or build community strength. In the culture of our time and place, recapturing a strong sense of community is likely to be more acceptable. Perhaps by doing so, we might reduce the impact of materialism. We might address the social needs of our people at the same time as we limit our impact on nature.

Surely both outcomes are what God would want of us. Community is where Christians find God (“when two or three are gathered together”). We are to care for those in need (“what you do for them, you do for me”). We are to take only our share and even then enjoined to give it all up (“sell all you

have and follow me”). We are to honour nature (“God saw it all, and it was good”).

We have lots of opportunities in our community and our city. We can start with support, money and friendship, for Emily and her mother, our adopted family, who end every month with just a bit less of both than they need.

We can engage in the Multi-Faith Alliance process that Anna and others are leading. This offers a really big and important opportunity to create a community of people of all faiths to tackle the big issues.

Might we become, I wondered, a beacon of Human Hope in a world so sorely needing one?

Something to think about? May it be so.

