

Life and Ministry of the Church

Matching Gift Update

Matching Gift Update as of December 19, 2008.
Pledges received: \$21,395.00; actual donations received toward matching gift: \$18,065.00.

Our sincere thanks to all who have pledged and donated over and above their regular offering. Remember that the matching gift is up to \$25,000, so there is still an opportunity to provide additional pledges and donations.

Breath Prayer for the Week of December 21

"Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him." (Mark 1:3)

Good Shepherd in Denominational Newspaper

An article about last year's Lenten devotional booklet project at GSCC written by our own Sharon Clinton appears in the current edition of the Congregational Christian Churches in Canada newspaper. Photocopies of the article printed in the newspaper can be picked up from the Welcome Table.

Reading Post Christmas Sale – TODAY

The Reading Post has an extended selection of books available for Christmas gift-giving. There are books for various age levels, including children, as well as some books reduced from our already-great prices. Come with your gift list in mind, or just treat yourself to a good read!



Visit the Good Shepherd Web site at www.gsccl.ca to listen to past messages and services.

The Week at a Glance

Monday	
Tuesday	Jr. High – 7:00PM
Wednesday	Christmas Eve Service – 7:00PM
Thursday	Choir Rehearsal – 7:30PM
Friday	
Saturday	College & Careers – 7:30PM
Sunday	Worship Service – 10:30AM Prayer and Praise – 7:00 PM

The artwork on the cover of this morning's bulletin appears courtesy of Krista Shugart.

Financial update to end of November 2008

General fund offerings July 1 – Nov 30	\$112,483
Budget	\$115,750
Other income (rentals, Day Camp)	\$32,131
Total Income July 1 – Nov 30	\$144,614
Total expenses July 1 – Nov 30	(\$122,516)
Amount income exceeds expenses at end of Nov	\$22,098

General fund offerings for December

Our monthly budget requirement for 2008 /2009	\$23,150
Offerings to December 9, 2008	\$5,966

Elders: Robyn Allin, Margaret Barker, Joan Howell, Murray Lahn, Brian McConnell - Co-Chair, Dave McCready, Natalie Nash - Co-Chair, Peter Oulton, Rej Proulx

Staff: Terri Barker - Youth Pastor, Barb Constable - Minister of Music, Rob Dean - Associate Pastor, John McAuley - Minister at Large, Carol Smith - Children's Pastor, Melissa Weigel - Church Administrator

Good Shepherd Community Church

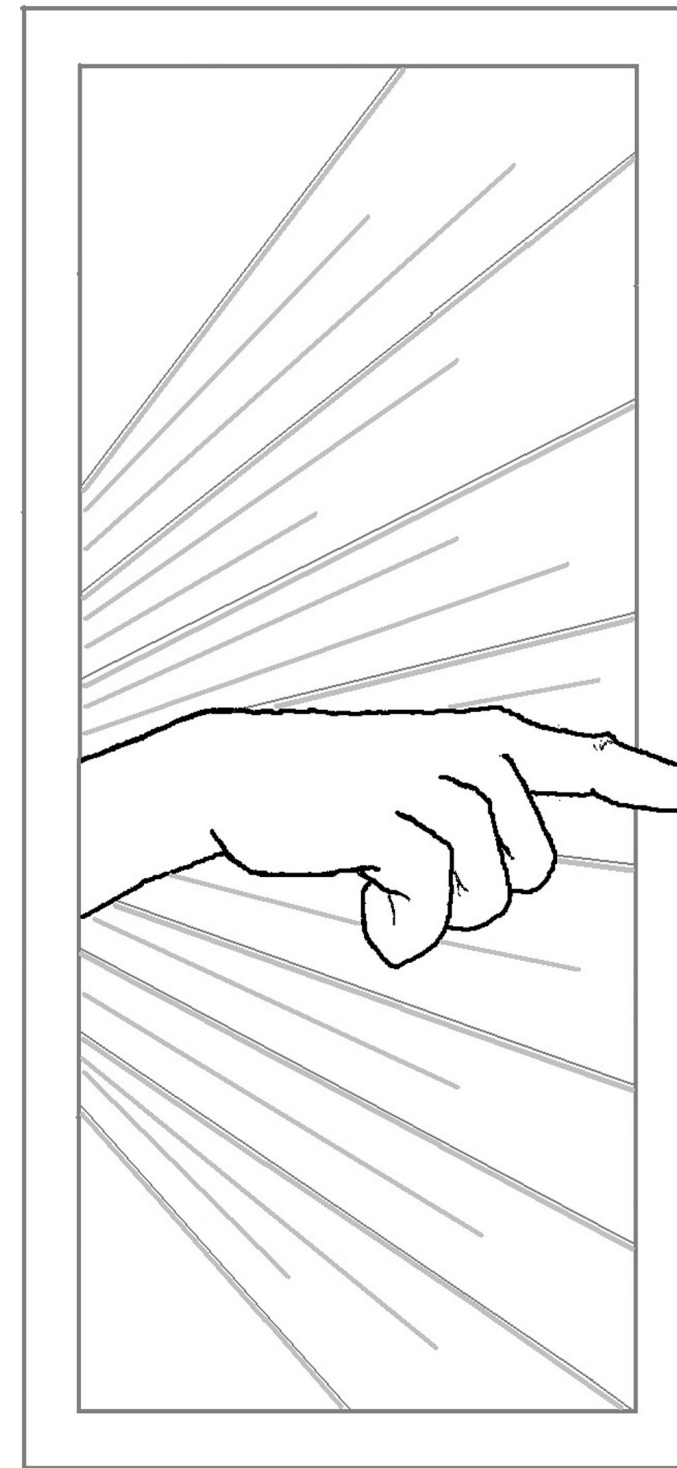
390 Bambergh Circle, Scarborough M1W 3X3

Tel: 416-499-4890 Fax: 416-499-5978 e-mail: office@gsccl.ca

Web: www.GSCC.ca

Good Shepherd is a member of

The Congregational Christian Churches in Canada



Good Shepherd Community Church



Sunday, December 21, 2008

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Welcome - *Terri Barker*

Silent Prayer

Call to Worship:

Isaiah 40:1-5 - *Murray & Nancy Lahn*

Advent Carol: "Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne" (#127)

Prayer - *Jane Clarke*

Choral: "Celtic Advent Carol" - *Angerman/Barrett*

Advent Candle Litany - *Sharon Clinton*

Lighting of the Advent Candle

- *Andrea and Matthew Vaughan*

Taizé: "Wait for the Lord"

Life and Ministry of the Church

Children's Ministry - *Carol Smith*

Scripture: Luke 1:67-80 - *Sam Proulx*

Message:

"Finding a Model for Hope in a Man with No Head"

- *David Schuchardt*

Series: "Hope on the Move"

The Presentation of Gifts

Choral Offertory: "Long Ago, Prophets Knew" - *Larson*

Doxology: "The Advent of Our God" (#120)

The Sacrament of Holy Communion - *Rob Dean*

Communion Praise

The Ministry of Prayer

Advent Carol: "Joy to the World!" (#125)

Blessing

The Christmas Season at Good Shepherd

Join us this Wednesday, December 24TH at 7:00PM for our Christmas Eve candlelight service. The service will be a time of celebrating the birth of our Lord, highlighted by carol singing, seasonal music, children's activities, dramatic presentations, and a congregational candle-lighting.



Next Sunday, December 28TH, we will continue to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ as we gather together for worship on the first Sunday of Christmas. This will be an opportunity to draw upon the riches of the Church's Christmas resources as we sing more of our favourite carols and celebrate Christmas communion. We will also hear from the artists whose pictures and artwork have captured our attention by appearing on the cover of the bulletins over the season of Advent.

SPOTLIGHT

Ministry in Focus: The Christian Year

Christmas has certainly been subverted and robbed of much of its power to speak to us of the glorious mystery of the Incarnation. It is probably unnecessary to talk of how it has become buried in the crass materialism of our society. And yet, sadly, many of us have fallen into collusion with this subversion of Christmas. Yes, we vow to "keep the Christ in Christmas", yet we cram our holiday activities into the few weeks preceding the 25th, and likely as not we act as if Christmas is over once the last strains of the carols have faded at our Christmas Eve services.

One of the boldest acts of faithful protest open to the church today is to utter a decisive "no" to this treatment of Christmas; to discipline ourselves to hear and follow the deeper melody of the season. Or more accurately, SEASONS, for we are dealing with a series of inter-woven seasons and celebrations. It is not a case of pious hair splitting to insist on thinking in terms of the Season of Advent, the Twelve Days of Christmas, and the Feast of Epiphany. Something far more wonderful is at stake here: an invitation and a means towards reclaiming Christmas in all of its richness.

The Season of Advent begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, and is marked by the themes of expectation and preparation and the coming of light into the darkness. In the West, an Advent season was observed as early as the sixth century, and from its inception it was designed to set the jubilant celebration of Christmas in a broader context. It is a

time of preparation and expectation; not only to the immanent celebrations of Christ's birth but also for His promised return. It is a time to be particularly open to the continuing action of God in our world and our lives.

Needless to say, Christmas finds its focus in the nativity, but in its full observance it is far more complex and layered than our nativity sets and greeting cards would have us believe. A season of twelve days, Christmas invites us to hear not only the joyful angelic chorus, but also Simeon's message to Mary: "This child is destined for the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed... (Luke 2:34, NRSV). The story of God's intervention in time and history does not begin or end in Bethlehem. It continues.

The twelve days of Christmas carry us to the Feast of the Epiphany (literally "the manifestation"). It recalls the visit of the Magi to the child Jesus, and celebrates the first manifestation of God incarnate to the gentiles. It marks the vastness of God's love for all people, and in its accounting of political intrigue and of Herod's desperate attempt to extirpate any claimant to his throne, it points ahead to the extraordinary price God is prepared to pay for loving us so. It points to the Passion, to Easter, to the Ascension and Pentecost and beyond... ultimately back, full circle, to those Advent themes of preparation, expectation and light.

— written by Jamie Howison,
included in the liner notes to Steve Bell's CD *The Feast of Seasons*

Prayer

Please Pray For:

Dearly beloved members of our Good Shepherd family who are not able to be with us regularly for health reasons: Bob Bell, John Boddy, Stan Branch, Cathy Cooke, Jessie Geddes, Norma Jackson, Irene White, Portia Wilkinson, Al Yuill Jean Miller, as she prepares for cataract surgery on Monday.

Bob Bell, who is weak and disoriented, and having trouble keeping food down after moving to ICU. Also pray for Angela as she juggles work and hospital trips.

The Oshawa Humane Society, which lost their shelter, and many precious animal lives, in a tragic fire.

Many of our Good Shepherd family who are mourning deaths of loved ones.

We Give Thanks For:

Sarah Normore, who is now home and recovering well. Praise the Lord that she is healing and the doctors say she is progressing and should be back to health soon.

The calling of Sharon Tam to the ministry of Lead Pastor at Good Shepherd. Give thanks for God's continuing provision for the life and ministry of GSCC. Pray for Sharon and her husband Henry as they seek to finish well their ministry with their current congregation and as they prepare to transition to Good Shepherd.

The initial generous response to the Good Shepherd matching gift financial campaign.

Please notify the church office (office@gsc.ca) if you have a prayer request.

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Our Families in Prayer This Week

Stephen, Evelyn, Johathan & Deborah Kudjerski

Rosemary Laffan

Murray, Nancy, Jordan, Timothy, Daniel & Bethany Lahn



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Christmas Flowers

Many thanks to those listed below who donated the beautiful Christmas Poinsettias in the sanctuary in memory of loved ones.



Donated By

Vi Lucas
Sarah Normore
Don & May Marshall

Dengiuil Yan
Chris & Henny Plateel
Sanober Firth
& Neeta Solanki

Joy Roumanis
Yvonne Watson

Anonymous
Jim D'Hondt
Sharon Clinton
Carol Smith

Dorothy White
Jessie Lovatt

Claudette Dressekie
Les Howell
Cynthia Lawson-Lurch

Anne Jack
Shirley Branch
Dorothy Porter
Lucia Robinson

In Memory Of

Alex & Elizabeth Woolridge
George Normore
Olive Marshall
& Dorothy Randell

Gu Yong Ping
Nick & Agatha Van Veen
Francis Samuel Solanki
& Diwaliben Shantilal
Prajapati

Susan Shaban
Vincent & Gertrude
O'Connor

Luther Daniel
John D'Hondt
Cornelius Quammie
Ronald Smith
& Debi Schryer

Norman J White
Neil Lovatt, Elisa Stirling
& Jack Lovatt

Nehemiah Robinson
Muriel & Jack Laverty
Alan & Lillian Lawson,
Gino D'Alimonte

Charles & Frances Worstall
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