

Fall Newsletter 2011



Mount Seymour United Church

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Experience the sacred
in community



A Message from our Minister

Dream a Little Dream

I'm fascinated by dreams. Not just hopes and aspirations that motivate our living, but real live dreams that play out in our subconscious when we lay down to sleep. The Bible recounts several stories about dreams and dreamers suggesting our dreams are a doorway to the Divine, something to which we should all pay attention.

As I think about the fall season at Mount Seymour United it seems we are in a time of both embracing dreams of the past and opening ourselves to dreams yet to be revealed. With the arrival of Dominique Hogan as our Music Director along with Julian Pattison and Community Gospel Choir leader Marcus Mosely we are entering a new chapter in our dream to move spirits and deepen faith through our music program. The receipt of a \$15,000.00 ProVision Fund grant to hire facilitator Chris Corrigan to help us host conversations both within and outside the church about what it means to be the church in this day and age will tap into new dreams about making a difference in our community. Read more in this newsletter.

With so many dreams unfolding and emerging it seemed appropriate to spend the first part of the fall focusing on the theme of dreaming both personally and collectively which we will do beginning in worship on September 11th. On the 18th we will welcome "dream expert"

[Bonnelle](#) Strickling to speak to us about the connection between our dreams and the Divine. Bonnelle is a Jungian Analyst who was on staff at Christ Church Cathedral in Vancouver for many years as a Spiritual Director. You'll find her book "[Dreaming about the Divine](#)" in our church library. We are hoping she'll agree to offer a workshop on analysing our dreams later this fall.

Later on in the season, due to popular demand, I'll dust off my very successful "Different Kind of Church" sermon series which helped so many imagine new ways to think of God, Jesus, the Bible and Heaven. The revival of the *Living the Questions* series from 2 years ago will provide further opportunities for listening and sharing about new ways to consider our life of faith.

In so many areas of our lives what once worked well is no longer effective. Underneath all the change and turmoil, dreams of a world more just and fair, of communities more loving and compassionate and individuals living up to their greatest human potential persist. Each one of us is part of these broader dreams. May our life and work together this fall unleash new dreams of how we might contribute to these broader dreams and nurture the ones already alive in our midst.

Fall SERMON SERIES

(Back by Popular Demand):

Dreaming of a Different Kind of Church

Sun. Oct. 16: "The God I Don't Believe In"

Sun. Oct. 23: "The Jesus Who Didn't Die for My Sins"

Sun. Oct. 30: "The Bible God Didn't Write"

Sun. Nov. 6: "The Heaven I'm Not Dying to Get Into"

This series is meant to help educate ourselves as a church community with current theological thought, while at the same time providing an opportunity for people who think they know what Christianity and church is all about to revisit their assumptions. The titles are purposefully provocative and meant to attract the spiritually curious.

What's Happening Now at Mount Seymour United?

In February of this year, we, at Mount Seymour adopted four initiatives we believe the Spirit is nudging us to explore at this point in our life:

- 1) Assess our Congregational Ministry Programs
- 2) Explore Options for Alternative Worship and Learning Models
- 3) Intentionally Seek out Partnerships
- 4) Become a place for the Community to Gather

At gatherings held this spring to flesh out how to go about implementing these initiatives, it became apparent that we would be greatly assisted in our work if we were to seek the help of a professional facilitator. The Council had become aware of Harvest Moon Consultant Chris Corrigan and the work he had been doing in Langley to help renew ministry in the United Church there. After initial meetings, with our ministry staff Nancy and Bethel, Chris indicated he would be willing to work with us if we were able to secure funding to hire him.

We are delighted to announce that in August, after making application to the newly created Vancouver Burrard Presbytery ProVision Fund, we were granted \$15,000.00 to hire Chris Corrigan to work with us on an ad hoc basis over the next year. His main work will be to help us develop a collaborative approach to imagining our future ministry and the role we have to play in our

community. Chris will work with a core team of staff and volunteers to teach us about the work of transforming communities. He will also help us host gatherings with the congregation and the wider community to explore what we might create together.

An encouraging aspect of the funding application process was the support we received from our current partners in the Seymour community. Letters affirming our work at Mount Seymour from Cove Community Church, St. Clare in the Cove Anglican Church and Parkgate Community Center were all included in our application.

To view our application for funding and the letters of support, check out our [website](#) or the bulletin board. To learn more about Chris Corrigan go to www.chriscorrigan.com and watch for announcements about future events involving his leadership.



Chris is a facilitator whose business is supporting invitation: the invitation to collaborate, to organize, to find one another and make a difference in our communities, organizations and lives.

"Always have a dream that is longer than a lifetime." ~Jack Layton



Reserve your photo session now!

Sept. 29, 30 2:30 - 8:30 pm
Oct. 1 from 10 am - 3 pm

We need everyone to participate to make our new pictorial directory complete. Sessions last 35-45 min. and each family receives a FREE Church Directory and 8"X10" colour portrait. Sign up at the Action Table or contact the office to book your session.



**MOUNT SEYMOUR'S
GOT TALENT**

SUNDAY, OCT. 2

**POTLUCK DINNER AT 4:30 PM
ALL AGES TALENT SHOW AT 6 PM**

Come join us for our annual talent show. If you can sing, tell jokes, dance, or balance plates, sign up on the action table or email Frank Luba at knarfabul@shaw.ca.

Please come along to watch even if you aren't performing. It is always a really fun evening that gathers together "children of all ages", from 9 months to 99 years!

Meet Dominique Hogan Our New Music Director



Hello everyone!

I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce myself to you in this newsletter. I am excited about having been chosen as the Music Director at Mt Seymour United. Music has always been a part of my life, I began piano lessons at the age of 4, and have never been able to be away from music for very long without feeling a huge hole in my life. As a child I was never forced to take lessons, but rather my mom always made sure that my teachers understood that the most important thing was to foster my love of music. I sometimes stopped taking lessons feeling that music was too much hard work,

but somehow I could never stay away for very long. I was offered a scholarship to study music in Montreal at the age of 16, and have never looked back.

My musical journey has taken me to many different places and many different jobs and "gigs"... however what I have found to be the most rewarding by far has been working in the community. I founded Burstin' with Broadway in 2005, on the premise that "anyone can sing". However now, I would like to take that one step further. Not only can anyone sing, but EVERYONE should sing. I really believe that we are all "in the closet" when it comes to singing. I have asked so many people "do you like to sing?" and the reply is sometimes "I can't sing", not "NO I don't like to sing". Actually, no one has ever answered "I don't like to sing". In so many other cultures, music and movement are part of community, however in our culture, music is a spectator sport. I think we need to change this. It is so much more fun to participate in the making of music.

So, if you are one of those people who would "love" to sing in the choir, but do not think you are "good enough", or that anyone would want you in the choir, think again. Come to a few rehearsals, they will be fun and uplifting and you will go home feeling energized and happy you came!
Dominique

*Joyful Noise practices on Thursdays at 7:30 pm.
New singers are always welcome!*



Meet Marcus Mosely Our Community Gospel Choir Leader

Marcus discovered the "well of music in his soul" as a young child and has been drawing on it ever since. He has sung throughout the world; settling in Vancouver 25 years ago. Marcus is part of the well known Roots Gospel trio, The Sojourners.

Marcus believes Gospel music is a major vehicle for emotional and spiritual release and expression. Gospel music is about joy and celebration. Gospel music opens up one's heart and mind to unseen possibilities. His goal in directing the Gospel choir is to bring together a company of individuals who come from different backgrounds... different spiritual paths... different cultural experiences and to journey with them in an exploration of those "unseen possibilities". If this interests you... all he asks is that you come with an open mind ready to sing.

*Our Community Gospel Choir practices one Thursday per month and sings at the following Sunday.
The next practice is Sept. 22 at 7:30 pm. New singers are always welcome!*

Picnic for Downtown Eastside Residents Held at Panorama Park on August 4 & Hosted by MSUC

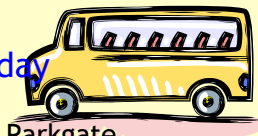
Excerpt from an email sent out by Rabbi David Mivasair:

“Last Thursday's picnic at Deep Cove was amazing. For me, the greatest thing was emptying the First United building, getting people out of the hot and crowded concrete and asphalt world of the DTES and into the gorgeous wide open space the surrounds us. Cool green grass beneath our feet, blue sky above, lovely clean water lying below, forests and mountains all around, fresh air, sunshine - it's a different world only a few kilometres away. So near and yet so far....

....My greatest memory is of a native elder who is somewhat crippled and always a bit crumpled in a wheelchair finding himself being caringly wheeled down the grassy slope to the water's edge by a couple of strong young guys. In the surf's edge, they gently lifted up and over the gunwales and set him down in the bow of a canoe. What a sight! What a great blessing! They paddled him out on the water and around Deep Cove and then brought him back, lifted him again into his chair and pushed him back up the hill.”

Thanks to everyone at Mount Seymour that helped make this such a wonderful day for so many by donating money for buses, sharing their boats, organizing and donating food and attending the picnic.

Frail & Isolated Senior's Bus Program Running Every Thursday



Our bus program in partnership with Parkgate Community Services has been up and running since Fall 2010. Seniors are picked up on every Thursday and taken to Lynn Valley Mall to shop and visit with the assistance of volunteers.

We need your help to identify and encourage those seniors who could use this service. The service is door to door and accommodates wheelchairs and walkers. Brochures are available in the lobby. Contact Erin Smith (604)983-6350 or esmith@my.parkgate.com if you know someone in need.

Where do those donated glasses go????

Find out at our **Second Hour on Sept. 25** after worship. Kathy McKay (from our congregation) will talk about **TWECS** (Third World Eye Care Society), her mission trip to the Philippines last year and her upcoming trip to Nicaragua in November.

MSUC Tea Shoppe to open on Thursdays!



Every Thursday, starting Sept. 22, from 2:30-4:30 pm we will be offering coffee, tea or juice and a cookie for \$1 in our new Tea Shoppe. This will give Thrift Shop customers an opportunity to rest and visit.

If you would like to volunteer in the Tea Shoppe contact Barb Ralph at (604)929-6448.



Local & Global Outreach

Read about the United Church's Mission and Service Fund in the latest *Mandate Magazine* in the pews now!

Volunteer Opportunities

Thrift Shop

Help sort and price donated items during the week. On Thursdays, help is needed with set-up, selling, sorting, and take down of donations.

Sandwich Making

On the first and third Monday morning of each month, MSUC volunteers make sandwiches for First United Mission in the downtown eastside.

Saturday Night Fellowship at First

On the fourth Saturday evening of the month MSUC hosts a movie and fellowship night at First United Mission in the downtown eastside. Snack food and hosts are needed.

Sunday Morning Coffee

Can you help make and serve coffee occasionally on Sundays? We'll show you how. Choose a Sunday and sign up at the Action Table or email the office. This is an easy way to contribute!

Recycle

Bring in your dead batteries (tape the positive end), prescription glasses and returnable drink containers. We will make good use of them! For more information, see our website.

If you are interested in any of these volunteer opportunities contact Joyce Jones (604)929-0168 or the church office.

Meet Bethel Lee ~Our Children and Family Minister



Bethel finds joy in thinking creatively, laughing loudly and breathing deeply. She was made in Korea, and lived here and there in the States until she fell in love with a Canadian. Her passions include: writing, yoga (she will be training as a yoga teacher this fall), holistic health, coffee, documentaries and living on behalf of hope, faith and love.

Bethel began her journey as Mount Seymour's Children and Family Minister a year ago on September 1, 2010. She comes to us with diverse experience working with and living in communities all over the States, Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

She received her B.A. in Industrial-Organizational Psychology from Pepperdine University and her Master of Divinity from Duke Divinity School.

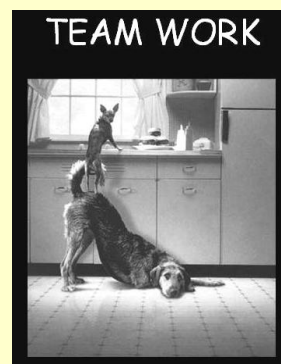
Bethel feels fortunate to live in beautiful British Columbia with her soul-mate David.

Volunteers Needed for Children & Youth Programs

Children are not only the future, they're the present! Right here and right now, they are with us and in need of our love and support. Please step up to help with our Children and Youth programs – we need you! I'd be happy to email or sit down with you to discover together the best way for you to be involved. **All are welcome~**

If you have any questions, comments or you would like to get involved, please contact our Children & Family Minister:

Bethel Lee (778)-887-1036 bethel.mtseymour@gmail.com



“No one can whistle a symphony. It takes an orchestra to play it.”
–H.E. Luccock

Music for Children and Youth

Youth Choir (11-15 years)

We are looking for youth who want to sing, shout, clap, drum, and move and groove to inspirational songs of all kinds. No singing experience or music reading ability needed: all voices are welcome. Instrumentalists too! Choir practice, led by Pandora Furniss (pandoralightspeed@shaw.ca)

Wednesdays at 4 pm in the nursery

Children's Choir (5-10 years)

This is all about having fun with music! Choir Practice, led by Mary Sparks (mcsparke@yahoo.ca)

Wednesdays from 4-4:30 pm in the sanctuary.

Other News!

We're updating our Children, Youth & Family Directory!

Please email bethel.mtseymour@gmail.com with the names of your family members, contact information and the age and grades of your children.

MSUC is looking for qualified Caregivers for our toddlers!

We would like to hire one or two Caregivers to watch our toddlers during Sunday morning services and during periodic church events (\$15/hr). Please contact Bethel Lee if you or someone you know is interested.

Hiring more Program Leaders for our Youth!

If you or someone you know would make a great program leader in spiritual practices, service opportunities, care of the environment, music, sport activities, mentorship, interfaith, drama, the arts or anything that relates with faith, spirituality, and fellowship - please contact Bethel Lee to discuss rates and potential dates. We are seeking leaders both from within and from outside of our community.

On Sunday morning you will find...

- A **space** toward the front of the sanctuary where children gather to read, draw and play during the worship time.
- The **nursery** behind the sanctuary - a quiet space where parents can hear and see the service while taking care of their baby or toddler.
- A **toddler room (coming soon)** for our younger children who need more space to play under the watch of a Caregiver during the service.
- A diversity of **programs** for children and youth ages 3 and up.
-

Our regular Children & Youth programs start on Sept. 18!

Godly Play Program (for children 3-6 years old)

Godly Play thrives on nurturing a sacred space where children can experience the telling of biblical stories, while being invited to wonder and respond in creative ways. This practice helps them to explore their own experience and wisdom rather than being given specific answers or interpretations.

“Godly Play teaches children the art of using religious language - parable, sacred story, silence and liturgical action - helping them become more fully aware of the mystery of God’s presence in their lives.”

www.godlyplay.org



Welcome Back Youth Group Potluck! September 16, 2011 - 7 PM - 9 PM

If you're in Grade 8-12, you're invited to a Potluck at Mount Seymour! Bring a salad, entrée, or dessert and come ready for some fun~
RSVP by Sept. 12 with subject line "Welcome Potluck" to bethel.myseymour@gmail.com

The most important thing to remember is this: To be ready at any moment to give up what you are for what you might become. - W. E. B. Du Bois



(for children 7-10 and youth 11-14 years old)

Seasons of the Spirit is a lectionary based program that helps children and families explore meaning and mystery through the biblical stories. It fosters an imaginative spirit through arts, music, storytelling and creative activities.

Seasons continues to nurture faith through liturgy, ritual, imagination, and to encourage Christian growth through worshipping, learning, and serving together. Our true curriculum is how we live our lives together.
-Susan Burt, Coordinating Editor, *Seasons of the Spirit*
www.seasonsonline.ca

New Youth Programming

We're doing something new and exciting for our youth group at MSUC this year! In lieu of a weekly youth group, we will be running a number of different programs for our youth (Grade 8-12) that may be onetime events or up to 5-week series. We are aiming to offer 4-6 various programs throughout the year, led by leaders both from within and from outside our community, that will immerse our youth in various topics and themes.

The first program series will be led by our very own **Wade Lifton!**



CEREAL BOX FAITH: 5-week series on spiritual nourishment

How do you start your day? A bowl of sugary yumminess that doesn't sustain you? Healthy goodness that tastes like cardboard and doesn't excite you at all? Or do you skip breakfast altogether?

What is the spiritual nourishment that would start your day with everything you need to be in relationship with your truest self, with others and with God? In these five Fridays we'll try on a range of spiritual practices - active, quiet, playful, creative - each developing a personalized way of starting our day; all part of this complete breakfast.

Dates: Sept. 23, 30, Oct. 7, 14, & 28

(Oct. 21 will be a "digestion week" so the group will not meet)

Register by September 19, 2011!

Email bethel.mtseymour@gmail.com with subject line "Cereal Box Faith"

Living the Questions2 Study Group



**6 sessions begins Monday, Sept. 26 at 7 pm
led by Rev. Nancy Talbot**

Living the Questions is an open-minded study program that strives to create an environment where participants can interact with one another in exploring new thoughts about Christianity without being given all the answers or told what we have to believe. **This is a come as you can group. Sign up at the Action Table.**

Sept. 26: Taking the Bible Seriously
Oct. 3: Thinking Theologically
Oct. 17: Evil Suffering and a God of Love
Oct. 24: The Myth of Redemptive Violence
Nov. 7: Practicing Resurrection
Nov. 14: Incarnation: Divinely Human

Next Parent Workshop – Oct. 14

Last May over 100 parents and children gathered at Mt. Seymour to hear [Patti and Colleen Drobot](#) speak about cultivating resilience in our children. Hear what some attendees had to say about that night:

“If I had known it was going to be THIS good, I would’ve invited everyone I knew!”

“It was exactly what I needed to hear.”

“Wow - life changing!”

MSUC, Cove Community Church and Parkgate Community Center are partnering again to offer another Parent workshop led by Patti and Colleen, registered professional counselors and members of the Neufeld Institute.

Mark your calendar for October 14, 7:00PM-9:30PM, to hear the Drobots engage us in the infamous topic of “Sibling Rivalry”! More details to come~

Living the Life of Your Dreams



By Durwin Foster, M.A.
Canadian Certified Counsellor
www.durwinfoster.com

“You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will be as one” -- John Lennon

The night after I received an invitation to write this short article, I had a wonderful dream of John Lennon.

The truth is, we are ALL dreamers, in both daytime and nighttime. We can let our dreams just do their own thing, and thus have an unconscious effect upon us. Or we can, as psychodynamic therapists suggest, “make the unconscious conscious”. That is, we can actively harness our dreams to heal and grow our lives.

Here are three habits you can establish in order to do the latter. Please note that if you are struggling with a mental health problem, you should only undertake these in consultation with your minister, physician or qualified mental health practitioner.

Habit #1: Practice contemplative prayer during the day for 20 minutes.

Contemplative prayer is prayer that does not include petition, but instead involves opening your heart to God, Goddess, source, or spirit in silence. Choose a sacred word for the divine intelligence, however you imagine that source to be in relationship to you. When I pray, I use the sacred word “You”, following Norman Fischer's Zen-inspired translation of the psalms, “Opening to You”. You can use whatever word works for you.

Close your eyes and settle yourself in a quiet place free of distraction. You do not need to sit in any particular way: don't make it about how you sit, but rather about your intention to be available to the divine within.

Start by saying the sacred word. This is not a mantra meditation, so you will not be continuously saying the word. Rather, you simply stay with the intention to be present to the divine source. When you notice that your intention to do this has moved to some other goal or aim -- as it tends to do for all of us! -- then you can

again signal your intention by repeating the divine word.

A very powerful statement I read somewhere about prayer was this: “the biggest mistake most people make when praying is to pray as though God is not already present”. You might notice if you are holding this assumption.

Practicing contemplative prayer, even for 20 minutes per day, will increase and gradually refine your awareness of the interior world of images, words, feelings, sensations, intuitions and dreams. Contemplative prayer is like shining a flashlight on your interior world, with spirit being the battery.

Habit #2: Journal the contents of your dreams upon awakening.

To increase your capability for dream recall, you can record the contents of your dreams -- whatever you remember, whether just a little bit or a lot -- upon awakening. For this practice, I would recommend that you keep a journal and pen near to your bed. By recording your dreams in this way, you are training yourself to remember what you dream. After a period of time doing this, you might find that your dream recall becomes strong enough that you don't need to record it, unless you want to. And you might also find that you can access dream memories for several days after a given dream episode.

Habit #3: Dream Dialogue

Dream journaling becomes more useful and meaningful when you add this third practice. This is a more advanced practice that you might try after you have experimented with the first two practices for a couple of weeks. In dream dialogue, you recognize that each significant element in your dream symbolizes a part of yourself that has something to say to you that is important. Rather than offering a standard interpretation of your dream, the dream dialogue approach gives you a process that you can use to explore the relevance of the dream figures to you.

Here is what you do: first, pick the dream element that had the strongest effect upon you within the dream. In my case, this would be the experience of meeting with “John Lennon”. (I put “John Lennon” in quotation marks to indicate that I am viewing “John Lennon” as an aspect of my psyche). Next, assume the point of view of the dream figure and write down what you think that figure might say to you.

Don't worry -- you can't get this wrong. If you don't know, guess. In my case, for example, what “John” had to say was something like this: “You can trust the creative process more. Keep trusting your creative process to take you where you need and want to go”.

The third step is to write a response from your point of view. Again in my case, it was something like this: OK, I will try. Sometimes I find it difficult to trust amidst the complexities of daily life as a married father of three children with a mortgage to pay. You can continue the dialogue as long as you wish, until you feel stuck or until you feel some resolution. If you become stuck, or if you just wish to go into this kind of work in more depth, you can consult someone with relevant training and who you trust.

In the above short article, I hope I have been able to encourage you to see your dreams as avenues to walk down towards healing and growth in your life. I also hope I have provided you with a practical approach to begin to, quite literally, “live the life of your dreams”.

Durwin is a member of our congregation, the father of three children, Delaney, Thalia and Brogan, (ages 8, 6, and 3 years) and husband to Wendy.

Dates to Remember

- ◆ Sept. 11 Welcome Back Intergenerational Service & Community BBQ
- ◆ Sept. 14 Children and Youth Choirs resume
- ◆ Sept. 18 Worship with Bonnelle Strickling
 - Regular Children's Programming resumes
- ◆ Sept. 22 Gospel Choir Practice
- ◆ Sept. 25 Second Hour - Outreach Presentation
- ◆ Sept 26 Living the Questions Series Begins
- ◆ Oct. 2 Potluck and Talent Show
- ◆ Oct. 14 Parent Workshop
- ◆ Dec. 10 Men's Turkey Lunch

SCENT FREE BUILDING

Please refrain from wearing perfumed products or synthetic scents while at the church as some people are very sensitive to smell.

