

Something's Happening Here...

Mount Seymour United Church

1200 Parkgate Ave. North Vancouver, B.C.

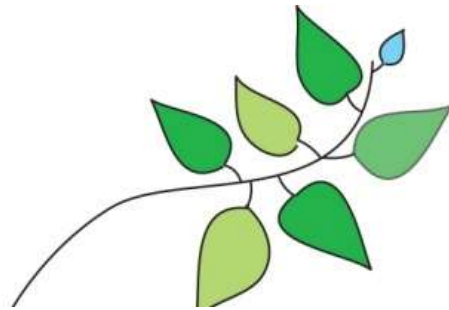
www.mtseymourunited.com



Annual Report 2008

Our Mission:

**To develop a faithful relationship with God,
a loving relationship with all people, and
a caring relationship with creation.**



Our Vision:

**We are a growing and vibrant community rooted in our
Christian faith,
reaching out to the world with love and compassion,
where spiritual growth for all ages is nurtured and the work of
justice, peace and wholeness for the earth
and all people is upheld.**

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2008 Annual Report

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Report from our Minister



“If it is really you, tell me to come to you across the water.”

Matthew 14: 28

Out of the Boat and onto the Water

When it comes to people walking on water, most of us think of Jesus and don't give the concept a second thought. We forget the story about Peter who, in the midst of a fierce storm, relinquished the security and familiarity of his fishing boat to step onto turbulent waters and walk towards the One who offers new life.

In many ways 2008 has been a year of getting out of the safety of our boat and stepping onto the shifting and unpredictable waters of change, eyes firmly on our source of strength, inspiration and courage. This year we risked becoming “a new thing” even when the changes we were asked to make were difficult and pulled us into unfamiliar territory. Thankfully, as with Peter, it has been a time of deepening trust.

The risk taking began in February when we officially adopted a three year strategic plan and then agreed to engage in an every member visitation to communicate the plan and solicit support (see Campaign Report). Although few, if any of us, actually wanted to do the visiting, 45 of us stepped out of our boats and took up the call. Although we were apprehensive about being visited in our homes and talking about money, over 90 of us overcame our reservations and welcomed in the visitors. Along the way we discovered a groundswell of support for our ministry while creating greater bonds of friendship within the congregation. My admiration and gratitude continues for each person involved in the campaign, especially Ward Branch, Bryan Ralph, Anne Greenwell, Kathryn Clinton, Mike Hetherington, Laura Staude, Ken Fowler, Frank Luba, Joyce Jones, Ellen Muirhead, Marianne Hansen, all our visitors and the people they visited.

The next significant risk we took was hiring Brian Tate to be our new Minister of Music. As one who had the privilege of interviewing the final candidates for the position, I clearly remember the moment of truth for the search committee. Would we stick with what was safe and comfortable or do what we believed was being asked of us by the congregation, opening ourselves up to a new direction? Brian has brought us new energy and new ideas and with this has come new people. If the gospel call is to welcome the stranger, we are being given that opportunity in exciting and challenging ways. The question for us will be whether or not we are ready and willing to stay out on the shifting waters and let these strangers become friends, recreating us as we journey together.

Finally, there have been those who have risked stepping into positions of leadership to sustain and enliven the ongoing ministry of our community. It was hard to let go of Ward Branch as Council Chair after his very fruitful tenure in the position. I am delighted Judy Ashbourne agreed to step into his place. She brings with her a strong commitment to our ministry and an open-minded and enthusiastic curiosity about where we might be headed in the future. With her the Council has begun to significantly reflect on the presence of the Spirit in our own lives and in the life of our church.

I continue to give thanks for the sheer joy of serving with a group of people who are so thoughtful, committed and simply fun to be with.

Sherrill McLeary also needs recognition for single-handedly enlivening our Newcomer's Ministry and developing it to the point where she can hand it off into the capable hands of Laura Staude and Margie Nelson. Numerous people have remarked on how much they appreciate the increased welcome on Sunday mornings.

Catherine Branch and Brenda Fawkes are to be commended for daring to say they would help Frank Luba put on the Gala this year. Although Brenda's involvement was limited due to new parental responsibilities, the tenacity she and Catherine had to build on an already successful formula, paired with the creative talents and resourcefulness of members of the Parent Group, brought new vitality to the event and resulted in a wider circle of participation.

Then there are those who work tirelessly to simply enable the ministry of our church and keep the waters from overtaking us both literally and figuratively: Gladys and her crew in the thrift shop, James, Stan and Ken our property guys, the bean counters, worship planners, sanctuary decorators, outreach workers, Godly Play and youth leaders, the communication team, greeters and personnel committee members among others. What an amazing group of people to go to work with each day! Thanks to each one for their contribution, with a special word of gratitude to Stan Joughin as he attempts to hand over the reigns of the A-Team and Pandora Furniss who has served as a valuable member-at-large of the council.

One of the great delights of working at Mount Seymour these days is being the envy of many of my colleagues. Our current staff team is regarded as one of the strongest and most gifted in the area. They are a great blessing to me and as if working with Kathryn, Brian and Wade weren't enough, since September, I've had the added pleasure of working with our student minister Leenane Shiels.

Life outside the boat is scary and unpredictable at times, but it's also a lot more hopeful and faithful. With our eyes on a future full of possibility, let's walk on.

Rev. Nancy Talbot



Report from our Council Chair



The work from the Emerging Spirit tells us that to be a relevant and welcoming Christian community the United Church must undergo change. Not reinvent ourselves, but evaluate our strengths and our deep purpose and prepare to offer these gifts in meaningful and relevant ways. Change is not new to the United Church; our very formation 84 years ago was an act of faith that kept our church relevant and vital in that time. Today we must continue to discern the deep purpose of our work and find ways to ensure our spiritual vitality continues for future generations.

We at Mount Seymour United have moved well into this new era. Over the past few years we began to envision our future. We began to look more deeply at who we are and to discern what are our goals and dreams. In early 2008 we came together to reflect on our past work and to continue to shape our vision. In a collective act of courage 94 percent of us agreed to put our vision into action. In the spring we came together in each other's homes and committed to give of ourselves and our resources to see our goals become reality. We said "yes we can". And now the hard work of change begins.

We are now seeing our vision come to life. Each week under the direction of our new Music Minister our spirits are lifted up as we sing our hearts out. Through our enlivened music ministry and new outreach initiatives we're letting the community know we're here. We have dedicated more resources to support our youth ministry and we're taking steps to renew our building. We've fixed the leaks, improved our lighting and updated our audio visual equipment. We're finding new ways to use our space to facilitate the work of our Thrift Shop and other ministries. And we're seeking ways to make our space, and ourselves, more welcoming.

Each week as we come together to worship our spirit continues to be strengthened. We are blessed with an immensely gifted and dynamic ministry team in Nancy, Wade and Brian, all who nourish our souls and challenge us to seek justice in the world. We've benefitted this year from the gifts of our student minister Leenane, and Kathryn C. has worked tirelessly in our office to make it all happen.

I am grateful for the council team: Stan, who though moving on from leading his team, will thankfully continue to serve with James and Ken in tending our space; Ken, who also makes our budgets understandable; Frank, who has worked hard to make our events fun, and who, with many others, has pulled off a dazzling Gala and Silent Auction; Kathryn F., for providing coffee and muffins early Sunday mornings, and who with her team liaises with our staff; Joyce and Dilys, who with their team, seek social justice near and far; Catherine and Sherrill, who with their team and our Ministry staff enrich our worship experience; Sherrill, who with Laura, Jean and many others, make us welcome; Jen-Beth, who participates as our Presbytery representative; Pandora, who has faithfully served as our member-at-large and finally, Alan, for dutifully recording it all.

The council remains mindful that particularly in this time of economic meltdown we must keep our eye closely on our fiscal health. With Bryan R. and Ward we will work towards achieving the goals of our campaign. We must also work hard to ensure that we can maintain our daily operations now and importantly well after the official campaign ends in 2011.

Over the past year we've grown together. We continue to learn more about ourselves and each other. We welcome and are inspired by new people and new ideas. We've taken risks by beginning to put our vision into practice, a step the UCC says few churches ever take. It's been quite a year of growth and change and I look forward to 2009 as we continue to discern our deep purpose, take action and grow together in our faith journey.

Judy Ashbourne

*"To exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly."
(Henri Bergson, French philosopher as quoted in the Emerging Spirit's Living the Hope)*

Administration Team Report

The year of "Yes We Can" was a busy year for the A Team.



- Lighting Upgrade
- Sound Upgrading
- Presentation of Services Upgrade
- New screen and projector.
- Repairs to leaking downspouts.
- Repairs to furnace and dishwasher.
- Library relocation.
- Reorganization of limited space.

Because of the success of our Something's Happening Here Campaign we were able to improve upon some of the essential needs around the church.

- The lighting in the sanctuary had deteriorated to such an extent that a major replacement was essential. Under the leadership and hard work of James Fulton we were able to upgrade the lighting system significantly. The lights were lowered to increase their density with the same amount of energy as before. Also the stabilization of the lighting supports has enabled the bulbs to be changed much more easily with no damage to electrical supply lines.
- With the arrival of our new Music Director and the change in the music program, an upgrade to the sound system was carried out. This upgrade along with the implementation of the large screen and accompanying projector has greatly improved the presentation of our Sunday Services. Once again James Fulton and Ken Fowler provided the main impetus to install these items.
- Ken also spearheaded the new storage cupboards in the passageway and installed a folding door to enhance the environment there. This is because of the ever increasing success of the Thrift Shop and all the donations to other causes as well. We are continually working on space and storage issues in this regard. We are grateful to Sherrill McCleary and Dilys Sostad who are assisting us in this venture.
- During the past year the Library has been moved back to its original position at the north end of the narthex. Many thanks to those who helped on this project.
- As well as repairing the downspouts, replacing toilets and replacing washers in taps etc. the A team has found time to construct more wooden fold-out cabinets for Godly Play.

As mentioned before, our building and equipment are getting older consequently more frequent repairs will be the order of the day, thus adding to overall costs.

Respectfully submitted,

Stan Joughin, Administration Team Leader

Congregational Life Team

Connecting with our Community

One of our campaign goals is to attract and retain new members. A **Communication Task Group** made up of Annie Greenwell, Frank Luba, Kathryn Clinton and Pandora Furniss was formed to carry out this goal over the next three years. In the Fall, we kicked off an ad campaign in the North Shore News with series of ads that focused on music, youth and spiritual development programs. To build on this, we mailed postcards to everyone east of the Seymour River to increase awareness of who and where we are and what we have to offer. Thanks to Annie for taking the lead on this and sharing her marketing skills with us. Plans for next year include redesigning our website and continuing to raise awareness through advertising.



2008 Fundraisers and Events

Dermott's 100 Birthday Party - January 19

We kicked off the year with a wonderful celebration for Dermott McInnes, a member of our congregation and a retired United Church Minister.

Chicken Barbeque - June 1

The chicken was great as usual and we raised \$282. Thanks to Alan Furniss for once again organizing this annual BBQ held after worship.

The Gala - November 8

The highlight of the year was our Gala. Parkgate Hall was transformed into elegant banquet room. The silent and live auctions were fun. The catered dinner was great and our guests had fun dancing to the Deep Cove Swing Band.





Frank Luba, part of the Gala Team

We raised \$ 4,200 and donated half of this to the Lookout Shelter on the North Shore. Thanks to the Gala Team for putting on such a special evening and to the Youth for helping out with serving and clean-up.

Men's Turkey Lunch - November 29

This annual event put on by the men in the congregation was well attended by members and those in the wider community. The men raised \$ 1,718. Thanks to Alan Furniss and his team of men (and some women) who bought and cooked the turkeys and spent the day cooking, serving and cleaning up.

Mount Seymour Talent Show - October 5

All ages gathered for a meal followed by a Talent Show that raised \$170 for the Something's Happening Here Campaign. Thanks to Ward Branch for organizing this. Who knew we had so much talent?

Tupperware

Thanks to Ruth Ferris for selling **Tupperware** on behalf of the church again this year.

Heavenly Palate

Our catering group raised \$665 this year. It was an unusually slow year for catering due to the fact that we had very few memorials this year at the church. Thanks to Gwen Kendrick and her team of woman for who worked hard in the kitchen at various events during the year.

If you have a fundraising idea or project that you'd like to do or would like to be part of the team, contact Frank Luba or Kathryn in the office.

Frank Luba and Kathryn Clinton

Congregational Mission and Outreach Team Report



The Mission and Outreach team provides the opportunity for our congregation to participate in the wider work of the United Church. As well as participating in local outreach, we attempt to provide some education about the work of the Mission and Service component of our church.

The response to our outreach with First United Church from our congregation has been both substantial and gratifying. We continue to make 12 loaves of sandwiches twice a month and look after Saturday Night Fellowship on every fifth Saturday of the year. Christmas in June and World Food day have been generously supported and both food and cash have been forwarded to First United as a result. We have a fun day at Panorama Park in mid-summer when we host a busload of folks from the programmes at First to a picnic. Donations of good used warm clothing are delivered regularly.

Again, the response for help with the Brunch at the Lookout residential facility on the North Shore has been wonderful. Our volunteers cook, serve and visit with the residents and express their appreciation to be a part of this outreach.

At Christmas we illustrate optional gift giving suggestions where the dollars spent will keep on giving to an individual or organization. We set up an undecorated "tree form" and watch it become fully covered with gifts of socks, underwear, and every possible toiletry. These are then given to First United and the Lookout. This year we delivered 12 large garbage bags of gifts. The money collected from can returns bought \$400 worth of gift certificates.

We are committed to raise the awareness of the congregation on the need to financially support the Mission and Service of our United Church of Canada. The Minute for Mission, done each month attempts to tell how our church is working throughout Canada and in partnership with other churches worldwide. Quarterly, we place copies of Mandate, a national publication of the church, in the pews so that folks might take a moment to read some of what our Mission and Service dollars do.

We have done some research into what the new outreach project east of the Seymour River might be. We will be working with an enlarged congregational committee and contacting the wider community to help us determine the best possible use of the dollars.

I constantly offer prayers of gratitude and thanks for the hard working, loyal members of this team, Dilys Sostad, Barbara and Bryan Ralph, Sheila Norris (and husband Keith for his dedication to doing can returns), Ellen Muirhead, Bev Taggart and Emma and Ian de Jong.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Jones, Mission and Outreach Team Leader

The Thrift Shop Report

The Thrift Shop continues to grow, as word of mouth seems to be the best kind of advertising. The generosity of the community continues to provide us with an exceptionally good quality of merchandise.



Gladys Johnston, Thrift Shop Co-ordinator

Antique and Collectible Sale

A new venture this year was our Antique and Collectible Sale in October. Thanks to Anne DeVent who did a superb job of co-ordinating this very successful event. Also thanks to the loyal people who came to help set up, sell on the day and clean up. A total of \$4 980.77 was earned.

Outside Sales

Through our many donations, we receive goods that are better marketed outside the shop.

Gillian Cole takes discontinued china and other antiques to Echo's China Shop to be sold on consignment.

Anne Devent manages to sell many unusual items on the E-Bay website.

Joyce Jones transports the better quality sports equipment to a Sports Consignment Store.

Other Specialties

- Alan Orr continues to find bicycles which he overhauls and then donates to us. Our bicycles are much in demand as our customers have come to realize how safe they are.
- James Fulton continues to refinish furniture and overhaul appliances so they are like new.
- Jim Crook checks out our musical instruments and we are now able to assure our customers they are in good working order.
- Stephanie Varju works magic with old dolls bringing them back to their original condition.
- Earla Blackwell is always there on Thursdays to make sure the volunteers and many others have a cup of tea!
- Mardi and Stan Joughin and Sherrill and George McLeary have made several trips to the Recycling Depot with used computer equipment and metal products.

David from the Triumph Placement Agency is still with us, doing all the heavy lifting for set up on Thursdays. We have not been able to find another student to help with the heavy lifting for closing, so Allan Johnston, James and Jen-Beth Fulton, Ken Fowler, Frank Luba, Rick Greenwell and Barit Olsen have been filling in.

Our Christmas Tea for our customers on the last Thursday before Christmas, was once again very much appreciated by all the tired shoppers. Thanks to Joyce Jones for co-ordinating this. Thanks also to Sheila Norris, Ellen Muirhead and Dilys Sostad for providing the numerous pots of tea and coffee and goodies.

A special thanks is extended to the many dedicated people, too numerous to mention, who with all their little specialty jobs, keep the Thrift Shop running. We are very pleased to have had several new people join us this year, but of course, there is always room for one more, so if you have an hour or two, please drop in. Contact person is Joan Spouse 604-929-4266.

Financial Report

Total Revenue	\$ 59,748
Expenses	480
Net Income	\$ 59,028
First United Donation	\$11,804

Respectfully submitted,
Gladys Johnston
Co-ordinator



Some of our many Thrift Shop volunteers at Tea Time

*“God acts within every moment and creates the world with each breath.
He speaks from the centre of the universe, in the silence beyond thought.”
-Psalm 93*

Worship and Christian Development Team

This year has been one of transition and change and a lot of hard work. However, the results have been worth all of that hard work and we are reaping the rewards with some wonderful Sunday worship and reaching out into our broader community.



Adult Faith Formation

In the spring, not to be outdone by Oprah's Book Club, we continued our *Mount Seymour Reads* program. The book we committed to reading together was "Christianity for the Rest of Us" by Diana Butler Bass which provided stories of neighbourhood church communities in transformation. Nancy led four Monday discussion and the book has led to many interesting conversations about our own community in transition.

From January to June we participated in a spirituality group with our friends at St. Clare in the Cove Anglican Church. Together we explored a variety of spiritual disciplines including Lectio Divina, Audio Divina, Creating Mandalas and Praying with Icons.

In the Fall, we started a Sacred Circle group at Mount Seymour to continue the work started at St. Clare in the Cove. This group attracted up to 16 participants and included exploring the spiritual practices of Soul Collaging; Lectio Divina; Audio Divina; Imaginative Contemplation; Integral Spirituality and Spiritual Inquiry.

On the last weekend before Advent we offered a half day retreat attended by 21 individuals. We used the practice of Spiritual Inquiry to talk about what's good in our life and what could be better; we meditated on a piece of scripture; took time for journaling and shared a meal together.

Since September, Nancy and Carolyn Porter have been offering a Wednesday lunch time discussion on the lectionary scripture readings for each week's worship service.

Sunday Morning Worship

Worship is a traditional strength for Mount Seymour and under Nancy's leadership, we had another fantastic year. We had some interesting guests, including Sister Maureen Wilde and Barb Myers in February and Gaye Sharpe in September. We had a wonderfully challenging Lenten season using the theme: How Does Your Garden Grow? And for Advent, we watched the theme of the Doorway evolve over the four Sundays with such great guest appearances by John the Baptist!

We reached out to our broader community, sharing Good Friday morning service and a couple of summer Sunday morning services with our friends at St. Clare's in the Cove.

As part of our "Something's Happening Campaign" we were delighted to welcome back into our pulpit Rev. Dr. Brian Thorpe who helped us launch our very successful every-member visitation program. Over the weeks of the campaign, our worship services incorporated the campaign goals focusing on justice, music and youth ministry.

In September we were blessed by the presence of student minister Leenane Shiels. She has been ministering in our midst by preaching, working with the youth, and being a special part of our community. Thank you to Ruth Ferriss, Jim Andrews, Jeff Smith and Joyce Jones for acting as the Ministry Reflection Group that assists Leenane with her goals while she is with us.

We could not make our services happen without the contributions of so many:

Greeting with a hand shake/hug/setting up table, etc. at front door- Jean Lewis
Bulletins/offering/greeting at inner door - Nancy Scheer, Marianne Hansen
Welcome Team led by Sherrill McLeary
Scripture reader's co-coordinator - Sue Dahlo

Communion servers, set up, purchase of items - Barbara and Bryan Ralph

Sound system - Ken Fowler, James Fulton, Rick Greenwell, Lawrence Carota
Sanctuary theme banners, décor, flowers -Joan & Ken Fowler with Sherrill McLeary, Doreen Thomson, Jen Beth Fulton
Power Point preparation, co-ordination - Kathryn Clinton, Catherine and Ward Branch
Weekly bulletins/announcements preparation - Kathryn Clinton
The Fold - folding bulletins/announcements - Gwen Kendrick, Jean Lewis, Earla Blackwell
Carpentry - Stan Joughin, James Fulton
Nursery childcare - Debbie Chang, Christina Briggs
All those connected with the Godly Play program (greeters, storytellers, helpers), Kathryn Ferriss for leadership of the older children.

Music Ministry

Our music ministry underwent substantial change this year. Our organist and choir director of 34 years, Donna Crook, retired. There was a wonderful celebration of her time at Mount Seymour on June 6 and her last Sunday was June 22. Her leadership and familiar presence is greatly missed! Kelly Nobles, our Children and Youth Choir Leader, also moved on to other adventures after enthusiastically cultivating some great talent in our children and youth and we miss her too!

In preparation for this transition, we asked Brian Tate to provide us with a Gospel Music Sunday once per month from January to June. This was very well received and a taste of what was to come.

After much research and prayer, our Music Committee selected Brian to become our full time music minister. Brian is now providing our Sunday morning music and leading both the Joyful Noise (adult choir) and the children's and youth choirs. Once per month, Brian has invited the wider community to join us and formed the Mount Seymour Community Gospel Choir. This has been a great introduction to members in our wider community to our Sunday morning worship.

Brian is a great teacher and is full of energy and wonderful ideas to enrich and engage us in our worship and we look forward to great things!

Children's Community and Youth

Under the capable leadership of Wade Lifton, our children's and youth programs are thriving!

In the summer, Wade led a weeklong camp for youth aged 5 to 12 called "Taste and See that God is Good." Based on themes of environmentalism, sustainability and sharing, the course centred around the food we eat. We had 29 participants, many of whom were new to our church community. In speaking to the participants, it was an unqualified success and we are very excited to see what happens this year!

In Children's Community on Sunday mornings, we continue with the Godly Play program. We were blessed by the presence and training of Gaye Sharpe on the weekend of September 12. This training inspired our leaders in the work they are doing.

The Children's Community also provided us with drama for Palm Sunday and for Advent with the Christmas Pageant. Wade and Leenane took the children down to First United Church and shared the Pageant with them - an uplifting experience for both the performers and the audience!

The Youth are continuing to meet and develop bonds of friendship and spirituality. They led worship for us in May and this fall, they have begun to serve food on the first Wednesday of the month down at First United Church. This outreach project is catching on and attracting youth from our wider community - an indication of wonderful things to come.

Faith Food and Fun

On the lighter side, the WCD committee organized several Faith, Food and Fun events this past year. These events are open to all ages and include a time of fellowship, a potluck supper and an event to follow. In October, we had a talent show and learned a lot about the talented people that sit next to us in the pews! In November, we had a pre-Advent potluck where we shared a meal, some games - including "Hide the Holy Family"! - and we gave the children a small gift symbolic of the Christmas season.

These fellowship events draw us closer as a community and a church family and show us how much we are blessed by those around us.

Respectfully Submitted by Catherine Branch for the WCD Team: Nancy Talbot, Wade Lifton, Brian Tate, Sherrill McLeary, Gwen Kendrick, Jen Beth Fulton, Jane Thompson, Barbara English, Mardi Joughin

Campaign Report

Something's Happening Here.....

One of the most significant events in the life of our congregation in 2008 was our stewardship campaign. After extensive discussion by our congregation and preparation we embarked upon a program of visiting each of the members of our congregation. We engaged in conversations about the ministries to our present and future congregations, to our community and to our wider world and sought a financial commitment to these initiatives.

Our campaign objectives were set out as a series of six “funds” which were more fully described in our campaign booklet, “Something’s Happening Here.” The funds are:

1. the Next Generation Fund
2. the Music Fund
3. the Communication Fund
4. the Sabbatical Fund
5. the Building Fund
6. the Justice Fund

We set our financial campaign goal at \$523,000 to be made up of donations and pledges over the next three years.

One of the delightful benefits of the campaign was the success of the visitation itself. We had skilled and dedicated volunteer coordinators who managed the visiting program. We had a wonderful response to our request for volunteers to carry out the visits to our congregation. Those who were visited were welcoming and hospitable, in many cases getting to know their visitors whom they may not have known very well prior to the visit.

The people of Mt. Seymour have been very generous in their response to the campaign and that generosity is deeply appreciated. Achieving our goal is critical to carrying out the initiatives identified by our congregation.

More detailed financial information relating to the campaign is set out with the financial reports found elsewhere in this annual report. As at December 31, 2008, we had received gifts and pledges totaling \$484,575. Although gifts are pledged over a period of three years, almost 60% of the gifts and amounts pledged had actually been donated by December 31. From the funds received, the total amount allocated by the church Council for programs and expenses in 2008 was \$119,581. Further funds will be allocated by the church Council for 2009.

We remain optimistic that the \$38,425 “shortfall” of our campaign goal may yet be raised in 2009. As an encouragement to further donations, three generous members of our congregation have agreed to match donations made by our congregation toward this “shortfall.”

It is clear that our stewardship campaign has met with great success. We are grateful to many people and to the whole of our congregation for that success. The list includes all of our campaign committee members, the volunteer coordinators, team captains and visitors, those who welcomed visitors into their homes and all of those who took part in identifying “what matters” at Mt. Seymour. In addition, we are grateful to Nancy Talbot, Kathryn Clinton and Rob Waller for providing their professional experience.

Ward Branch and Bryan Ralph, Campaign Co-Chairs

Ministry and Personnel Committee Report

The role of the Ministry and Personnel Committee is defined by the United Church Manual. It is responsible to:



- a. support the Minister, staff and Congregation and help to maintain good relations between them;
- b. maintain clear guidelines regarding the responsibilities and the authority of staff members;
- c. act as a liaison between the Minister, staff members, the Council and the Congregation in general administrative matters and relationships; and
- d. review annually, address and resolve concerns regarding the compensation, travel allowances, working conditions, and all employment practices of the Minister and staff as well as the effectiveness of the staff.

The members of the committee for 2008 have been Bryan Ralph, Mike Hetherington (secretary), Kathryn Ferriss (chair). To our regret, Sue Dahlo resigned from the committee in May 2008. We are pleased to announce that we have recently added Marianne Hansen as the fourth member of our committee.

We maintain an open door policy with the staff and Ministry Personnel.

The Committee has just completed a review of compensation for all staff with our recommendations included in the budget to be presented for approval at the AGM. We have also completed our annual performance appraisals for each of the Ministry and staff members of our Church.

This year has been a year of changes to the Music Ministry of our church. Donna Crook, our long time Music Director, retired at the end of June 2008. Kelly Noble, our Children and Youth Choir Directors, left at the same time. We wish both of them success in their future endeavours. In July, 2008, we welcomed our new Music Minister, Brian Tate.

We also said good-bye to Debbie Chang, our nursery caregiver at the end of June 2008 as she left to do some travelling and we wish her all the best in what she does. In September, we welcomed Christina Briggs into that position.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathryn Ferriss, Chair M. & P.

Vancouver-Burrard Presbytery Report



The United Church of Canada's Moderator, David Giuliano's three year Term of Office has been a period that early on was marked by the unexpected challenge of facing a personal journey "through a valley of shadows carved out by cancer."

This journey is celebrated in a new book entitled [*Postcards from the Valley: Encounters with Fear, Faith, and God*](#), which is both a personal reflection on his journey toward the heart of God and the journey being made by many mainline churches. Giuliano's book invites readers to reflect on fear, faith, joy, and the encounter with the Holy One in their own lives and within the common life of the church.

"Personally, this journey through the valley has been a source of deepening my experience of the presence of God and of the Way of Jesus," writes Giuliano in the foreword to his book. He describes the journey as a breaking open of the heart that has been an unwelcome and unasked-for blessing. This book, as with so much our Moderator has written, often in his blog on [Wondercafe.ca](http://wondercafe.ca) is well worth reading as part of his very meaningful dialogue with the United Church and many presbyteries across Canada.

I did not make an opportunity to share with you David Giuliano's. 2008 Christmas message, "A Feast for the Hungry," posted as a video on:

<http://www.unitedchurch.ca/communications/news/moderator/081210>

It is definitely worth watching despite being late for Christmas.

Most recently, all churches making up Vancouver Burrard Presbytery were asked to sign onto a strictly non-partisan, open letter, written by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, inviting us to join them in asking all political parties of BC to commit to legislating targets and timelines to dramatically reduce and ultimately eliminate homelessness and poverty in our province. Our Council agreed to sign onto this Open Letter on behalf of Mount Seymour United Church.

If you would like more details, you can look at the report, which was released last month. http://www.policyalternatives.ca/~ASSETS/DOCUMENT/BC_Office_Pubs/bc_2008/ccpa_bc_poverty_reduction_full.pdf

It is in coming to know more intimately these aspects in the life and work of the United Church that makes the position I hold as your Presbytery Representative particularly meaningful.

Jen-Beth Fulton

Minister of Music



It has been my honor and pleasure to be your new minister of music. I thank you all for your warm welcome, willingness, enthusiasm, and vote of confidence for the many styles of music I have been introducing to the choir and congregation.

I am pleased to see growth in all areas of music at Mt. Seymour. We have attracted new members to the Joyful Noise choir, and the quality and commitment of their singing continues to grow. We are also hearing fine work from soloists within the choir.

The children's choir has a wide range of enthusiastic young singers. Because of the age range, we have recently split the choir into two concurrent groups, one for the youngest, led by our own wonderful musician Mary Sparks, and a smaller group for the older ones led by myself.

The youth choir is small but keen. It takes courage to offer to solo in a small group, and most of our young members are willing to try pretty much anything. One of the highlights of this season so far for me is having the youth choir sing at First United, and I hope to do this sort of outreach activity more often.

The Mount Seymour Community Gospel Choir, which meets and provides music for a service once a month, continues to grow in numbers and enthusiasm. I am grateful to Dan Morrison, our drummer, who is there for every gospel choir service, and our very talented soloists who help to create a spirit of passion, joy, and participation at every gospel service. I am also thankful to our congregation for welcoming what might be an unfamiliar kind of music, and joining in the spirit!

A highlight of this past season for me was our Christmas Choir Concert. Our singers performed wonderfully, we had a good turnout, and we marked the beginning of what I think will be a great tradition at MSUC. Looking ahead, we are planning a multi-choir concert in the spring, featuring several of the choirs who use the church for rehearsals (including our own, of course!)

My hope is to also feature our wonderful choirs in events outside of Sunday church activities; in the North Shore Community, the Downtown Eastside, and music festivals and similar events. For example, our gospel choir is performing Sunday morning March 8 at the "Water's Edge" Festival in Coquitlam.

There is a place at MSUC for anyone who wants to make music. If you sing or play an instrument, know that you are welcome to join us.

In gratitude for your ongoing support,
Brian Tate

"Music is an outburst of the soul" ~ Frederick Delius

Children and Youth Minister



“Let the children come to me.” Jesus
“Youth matter.” Mount Seymour United Church

It has been a rich and wonder-full year. The youth group is growing and the monthly visits to First United have been a success on many levels. Kathryn Ferriss is leading a video and discussion focused Sunday morning youth program.

The Godly Play shelves are continually filling with stories and the leaders are deepening in their understanding of Godly Play.

The parent Group continues under the leadership of Brenda Fawkes.

‘Taste and See that God is Good’ was a highlight of the year for participants and leaders and plans are underway for the 2009 camp (July 27-31).

We’ve had Faith, Food & Fun and other intergenerational gatherings.

The Christmas pageant continues to be an experience that is completely chaotic and deeply rewarding.

\$1500 was raised throughout Advent by the children and youth for theWATERproject.ca. Beyond the planned programs there have been holy moments lighting the candle, on the children’s blanket, in the nursery, in the foyer, on the playground or in the parking lot. Ministering to children and youth is hard work - not just for staff and the many incredible volunteers, but for the whole congregation.

There are challenging questions to be asked. How do we include and engage children in worship, giving them freedom and teaching respect? How do we minister to the youth whose needs aren’t met by youth group or Sunday morning worship? How do we live out Jesus’ call to love our neighbours, even the ones who make us uncomfortable or drive us crazy?

We are engaging these questions. It is exciting to be a congregation that seeks to be discerning and courageous as we listen for what our children and youth have to teach us, and where they can lead us. Thanks be to God (and to the volunteers).

Wade Lifton, Children and Youth Minister



NEW YOUTH ROOM

On December 21st, the last youth group of the year, the youth spontaneously decided to build an igloo outside the church. After four hours of packing blue recycling bins with snow and carefully arranging the large building bricks, the scheduled plan for the afternoon was out the window and in its place was a full 6.5 feet tall igloo. We went home with proud hearts, soggy pants and numb toes, and it was all worth it.



Interview with Gavin Brown (9 years old) and Cleo Brown (7 years old) about their experiences at 'Taste and See that God is Good'

What did you learn about food?

Gavin: *I learned that foods can be made into different things like yummy soup.*

Cleo: *Try not to buy food from far away, because local food tastes better and it saves gas.*

What did you learn about God?

Cleo: *God provides food for us.*

Gavin: *God wants us to be healthy. He cares if the food is good for us, not too many sweets. God helps us to share.*

Church Administrator



The administration of the building and support of our ministry programs and volunteers continue to keep me busy and engaged. In addition to my regular office responsibilities I have been able to focus some of my time in these areas:

The Campaign

It has been a busy year around here. Our campaign theme "Something's Happening Here" sums it up. There is an energy and enthusiasm here that you can feel when you walk into the building. The campaign kept staff and volunteers busy from March through to June. It was great to work with the Campaign Team and the many visitors.

Welcoming

Thanks in part to the gifted ministries of Nancy, Wade and Brian, we have seen an increase in the number of newcomers at MSUC. I have worked with the Welcome Team to help make our church a more welcoming place. Each visitor that walks through our door changes us and helps grow into the community that God has intended for us. Thanks to the Fultons for hosting a Newcomer evening, to Sherrill McLeary and the Welcome Team and all of you who make a special effort to welcome the stranger amongst us.

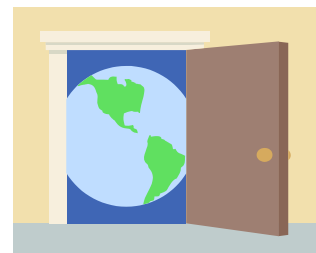
Communication

I have enjoyed working with our new Communication Team this year. We increased awareness of our church in the community through our direct mailing and North Shore News ads. In 2009 we will focus on redesigning our website. Thanks to Lawrence Carota, Ted Butterfield, James Fulton and other MSUC photographers, we are building an archive of great pictures to use in our materials and on our website. We welcome suggestions and feedback on our activities.

I feel blessed to be able to work with such a great community of faith. I am inspired by your commitment of time and resources and look forward to living into the new vision we have for our church.

Blessings,
Kathryn Clinton

*"As often happens on the spiritual journey,
we have arrived at the heart of a paradox:
each time a door closes,
the rest of the world opens up."
-Parker Palmer*



PASSAGES 2008

Baptisms

Andrews-Schaffer, Michael Robert
Cormack, Isla Lillian
Cormack, Olive Rose McKenzie
McFarlane, Soleil Tess Morrision

Baptism Date

March 30
April 13
April 13
April 13

Weddings

Guy Thompson and Judith Morrison
David Stevenson-Moore and Jennifer Liversedge
Brad Chapman and Katherine Mayne

Date

August 9
September 27
October 18

We Remember

Allardice, Donald
Wheeler, Frederick
McMullen, Stephen
Osborn, Deborah
Sullivan, Finn

Memorial Service

January 11
January 13
February 23
March 7
October 15

*"We are called together by Christ as a community of broken but hopeful believers,
loving what he loved, living what he taught,
striving to be faithful servants of God in our time and place."
-United Church's Song of Faith*

Groups Using Our Church during 2008

In addition to the many church related activities taking place in our church building, many others from the community used our facilities -- some on a weekly basis, some monthly and others from time to time. These groups include the following:

Mount Seymour Preschool
Kumon Educational Institute
Alcoholics Anonymous
Weight Watchers
Alanon
Girl Guides (Sparks)
Scout Dinners
North Shore Chorus – weekly rehearsals & concerts
Espiritu Mixed Choir - weekly rehearsals
Singspiration Choir –weekly rehearsals and concerts
Pro Nova Ensemble - concerts and meetings
North Shore Concert Band
North Vancouver Youth Band - concert
North Shore Community Band - concert
Vancouver Cantata Singers - workshop
Capilano College Community Music School – recitals
Royal Conservatory of Music Awards and Workshops
Registered Music Teacher Association Workshops
Argyle and Windsor Secondary School Concerts
Piano Recitals - various piano teachers and groups
Various musical groups - taping sessions
Wedding Receptions, Anniversary and Birthday Parties
Tenants Associations, Strata Councils etc.

Minutes of the 2008 Annual General Meeting

of Mount Seymour United Church

Held at 1200 Parkgate Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C.

Sunday, March 2, 2008

The following 37 members/adherents were present; Jim Andrews, Kelly Andrews, Judy Ashbourne, Earla Blackwell, Ward Branch, Fay Butterfield, Ted Butterfield, Susan Chambers, Kathryn Clinton, Gillian Cole, Kathryn Ferriss, Joan fowler, Ken Fowler, Jen-Beth Fulton, Alan Furniss, Bernice Hanson, Mike Hetherington, Allan Johnston, Gladys Johnston, Stan Joughin, Gwen Kendrick, Jean Lewis, Wade Lifton, Frank Luba, Dermott McInnes, Mae McInnes, Sherrill McLeary, Pat Morrice, Margaret Nelson, Barbara Ralph, Bryan Ralph, Dorothy Redlinger, Bette Shippam, Jeff Smith, Nancy Talbot, Wendy Taylor. Doreen Thomson

Chair Ward Branch welcomed the members present, noted that there was a quorum and called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

Reverend Talbot opened the meeting with a prayer.

M/S (Bryan Ralph/Ken Fowler) that the agenda be approved as presented. **Carried.**

M/S (Mike Hetherington/Stan Joughin) that the Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting of February, 25, 2007 be approved as circulated. **Carried.**

M/S (Jeff Smith/Gillian Cole) that the 2007 Annual Report be received save for the 2008 budget therein. **Carried.**

M/S (Gwen Kendrick/Jeff Smith) that the following Candidates be elected to serve as the Mount Seymour United church Council for the fiscal year commencing June 1, 2008.

Chair - **Judy Ashbourne,**

Administration (“A”) Team Leader - **Stan Joughin,**

Congregational Life Team Leader - **Frank Luba**

Mission and Outreach Team Leader - **Dilys Sostad,**

Worship and Christian Development Team Co-Leaders-**Kathryn Branch and Sherrill McLeary,**

Ministry and Personnel Committee Chair - **Kathryn Ferriss,**

Presbytery Representative - **Jen-Beth Fulton.**

Member-at-Large - **Pandora Furniss,**

Recording Secretary - **Alan Furniss (appointed).**

Motion **Carried.**

M/S (Ken Fowler/Sherrill McLeary that the Financial Statements for 2007 , excluding the budget for 2008, be received. **Carried.**

M/S (Ken Fowler/Ted Butterfield) that the present Contingency Fund be deleted from the Balance Sheet and transferred to Equity. **Carried.**

M/S (Ken Fowler/Bette Shippam) that the budget for 2008 be accepted as presented. **Carried.**

Chair Branch noted, with thanks, the contributions of the Church Staff and of retiring Council Members Joyce Jones (M&O) and Sue Dahlo (M&P).

Reverend Talbot shared with us “10 things Council Learned about Ward” during his 2 years as Council Chair, expressed thanks on behalf of Council, Staff and the Congregation to Ward for his leadership during hectic, challenging times, and closed the meeting with a brief prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Ward Branch,
Chair



Alan Furniss,
Recording
Secretary



Appendix I

Mount Seymour United Church

Statement of Financial Position at December 31, 2008

	2007	2008
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash	\$35,719	\$1,076
GIC	20,000	10,495
Growth Savings		170,875
GST refund receivable	1,686	3,205
	<u>57,405</u>	<u>185,651</u>
Property, plant and equipment		
Land	425,151	425,151
Building	1,120,765	1,120,765
Furniture and Equipment	97,605	97,605
	<u>1,643,521</u>	<u>1,643,521</u>
Total Assets	<u>1,700,926</u>	<u>1,829,172</u>
Liabilities		
Accounts payable - trade	540	
Mission and Service	16,208	2,515
Misc. Funds	293	5
First United Church	1,050	2,099
Other Outreach	496	4,279
Employee benefits	226	
	<u>18,812</u>	<u>8,898</u>
Non Current Liabilities		
VIM Loan	377,986	349,314
Memorial Fund		21,806
	<u>377,986</u>	<u>371,120</u>
Equity and Funds		
Memorial Fund	26,520	
Growth Fund		170,875
Contingency fund	29,169	
	<u>55,689</u>	<u>170,875</u>
Equity		
Opening Balance	1,247,561	1,248,440
Income from Contingency Fund		29,169
Net Income for the year	879	670
	<u>1,248,440</u>	<u>1,278,279</u>
	<u>1,304,128</u>	<u>1,449,154</u>
	<u>\$1,700,926</u>	<u>\$1,829,172</u>

Mount Seymour United Church
Income Statement for Year Ended December 31, 2008

	Actual Dec 31/07	BUDGET 08	Actual Dec 31/08	BUDGET 09
REVENUE				
Offering Envelopes	\$ 111,732	\$ 120,000	\$ 103,765	\$ 113,000
Open Offering	7,505	8,200	6,274	8,000
Campaign				
Special Gifts	5,095	5,000	1,000	1,000
Children's Community	124	250	-	300
Childrens Outreach			3,516	2,000
Mission and Service	21,141	19,000	20,022	20,000
Other Outreach	3,553	3,750	4,912	4,000
Total Givings	<u>149,150</u>	<u>156,200</u>	<u>139,489</u>	<u>148,300</u>
OTHER REVENUE				
Preschool	11,835	12,000	12,000	12,500
Funerals	1,500	1,500	1,512	1,500
Heavenly Palate	4,835	4,000	666	1,000
Weddings	850	400	700	800
Room Use	26,300	26,000	20,157	22,000
Thrift Shop	50,914	50,000	58,982	58,000
Interest	631	600	557	800
Fund Raising	4,644	5,100	6,470	8,000
Misc			250	200
Total Other	<u>101,509</u>	<u>99,600</u>	<u>101,293</u>	<u>104,800</u>
Memorial Allocation	5,000	5,000	5,000	
Growth Fund Allocation				
Campaign Support Fund		32,500	36,272	
Ministry Programs		35,100	39,000	58,000
Communication			11,655	22,500
Building Fund		3,333	32,654	10,000
Seeking Justice		7,500		15,000
Total Growth Fund Allocation		<u>78,433</u>	<u>119,581</u>	<u>105,500</u>
Total Gross Revenue	<u>255,659</u>	<u>339,233</u>	<u>365,363</u>	<u>358,600</u>
DEDUCTIONS				
Mission & Service	(21,141)	(19,000)	(20,022)	(20,000)
Thrift Shop Outreach 20.0%	(10,183)	(10,000)	(11,795)	(11,600)
Other Outreach	(3,553)	(3,750)	(4,912)	(4,000)
Childrens Outreach			(3,516)	(2,000)
Seeking Justice			(1,958)	(15,000)
Total Deductions	<u>(34,876)</u>	<u>(32,750)</u>	<u>(42,203)</u>	<u>(52,600)</u>
NET REVENUE	220,783	306,483	323,159	306,000

EXPENSES	Dec 31 07	Budget 08	Dec 31 08	Budget 09
A TEAM				
A Copier	4,111	4,000	3,766	4,000
A Office Supplies	1,484	1,500	1,202	1,300
A Bulletins	595	700	487	400
A Envelopes	190	200	223	225
A Postage	295	300	435	400
A Phone Minister	420	660	420	420
A Bank Charges	528	500	537	500
A Computer /Misc	953	500	315	500
Total Administration	8,576	8,360	7,385	7,745
Property				
P Bld Maint	1,445	1,500	619	600
P Equ Maint	1,598	1,600	1,872	2,000
P Grounds/ Handyperson		3,333	883	1,000
P Sound Maint	122	200	1,159	300
P Bld Heat Maint	919	1,200	2,038	2,000
P Security	306	500	307	310
P Janitorial	9,544	10,000	9,403	9,500
P P Garbage	1,005	900	1,007	1,000
P Water & Sewer	1,981	1,800	1,837	1,900
P Gas &Electric	8,354	8,700	8,342	8,500
P Snow	337	500	553	1,200
P Telephone Office	2,839	2,900	3,056	3,000
P Insurance	3,593	6,600	6,681	6,600
P Misc	1,341	500		500
Atmosphere Project			1,001	1,000
Thrift Shop Expense	361	400	346	400
Campaign Expenditures - Bldg. & Equip't.			33,776	10,000
Total Property	33,746	40,633	72,879	49,810
TOTAL ADMINISTRATION TEAM	42,321	48,993	80,264	57,555
WORSHIP & CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT				
Pulpit Relief	1,350	2,000	1,059	2,000
Childrens Community	1,246	1,500	2,129	1,500
Youth	294	500	527	500
Library	49	100	167	500
Worship Enhancement	1,247	1,000	1,159	500
CD Adult	145	350	253	350
Bible Study			50	-
Congregational Meetings	158	300	100	300
Music Supplies	37	700	983	1,000
Music Director Relief	625	600	450	600
Music Piano/Organ Tune		300	148	300
Worship Misc Supplies	42	450	369	500
Volunteer Training		700	350	700
Gospel Sundays		3,000	3,000	
Sound Production				2,000
TOTAL WORSHIP & C. D.	5,192	11,500	10,743	10,750

	Dec 31 07	Budget 08	Dec 31 08	Budget 09
COUNCIL				
Presbytery	5,531	6,034	6,035	6,500
Other Expense	19	100	133	100
Campaign Expenses	18,736 *	32,500	36,272	
TOTAL COUNCIL	<u>24,286</u>	<u>38,634</u>	<u>42,439</u>	<u>6,600</u>
CONGREGATIONAL LIFE				
Com Advertising	932	1,400	760	250
Com Fellowship Newcomer Lunch	229	250	302	400
Com Observer	144	150	39	30
Com Sundays	169	59	389	400
Com Misc		100		100
Pastoral Care	26	50	133	250
Campaign - Communication			6,755	15,000
TOTAL CONGREGATIONAL LIFE	<u>1,500</u>	<u>2,009</u>	<u>8,378</u>	<u>16,430</u>
CONG. MISSION TEAM				
Mission and Outreach	332	925	-	200
Help Fund		200	148	250
Other	185		174	50
TOTAL MISSION	<u>517</u>	<u>1,125</u>	<u>322</u>	<u>500</u>
MINISTRY & PERSONNEL				
Wages	91,212	94,004	77,867	132,959
Campaign - Wages		17,500	38,700	
Housing Allowance	31,320	34,800	34,870	39,000
Ministers Travel	900	2,000	1,149	1,500
Ministers Book	122	300	357	
Staff Dev Cont Ed	1,972	1,800	1,311	3,350
Vacation	660	900	1,710	1,800
CPP	3,257	3,645	3,380	4,644
EI	2,364	3,194	3,036	2,272
Employee Benefits	12,378	14,557	15,282	15,971
MSP	648	650	648	648
Work Comp	(49)	350	246	389
North Shore Youth Leader	1,000	2,000	1,500	2,000
M&P Discretionary	303	300	286	500
TOTAL MINISTRY & PERSONNEL	<u>146,087</u>	<u>176,000</u>	<u>180,342</u>	<u>205,033</u>
TOTAL EXPENSE	<u>219,904</u>	<u>278,261</u>	<u>322,489</u>	<u>296,868</u>
OPERATING SURPLUS/DEFICIT	879	28,222	670	9,132
VIM Loan Payments	-19,672.00	-25,348.00	-28,672.00	-29,500.00
CASH SURPLUS / DEFICIT	-\$18,793	\$2,874	-\$28,002	-\$20,368
Planning Study not budgeted	18,736			
DEFICIT net of study	<u>-57</u>			

Appendix II

2008 CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

Campaign Goal	\$ 523,000
Pledges as of Dec. 31, 2008	484,575
Shortfall	<u>\$ 38,425</u>

Donations as of Dec. 31, 2008 \$ 290,455

2008 Allocation of Campaign Funds

(based on actual costs)

Next Generation Fund	22,150	
Music Fund	16,850	
Communication Fund	11,655	
Campaign Expense	36,272	
Building Fund	32,654	119,581
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Campaign Fund as of Dec. 31, 2008 \$ 170,874

2008 ALLOCATION of CAMPAIGN FUNDS

EXPENSE	Budget (per year)	2008 Allocation (actual expenses)
1 Next Generation Fund		
a Youth Minister	\$15,000	\$15,000
b Inc hours 18 to 25	\$12,000	\$6,000
c Materials	\$2,300	\$1,150
Total	\$29,300	\$22,150
2 Music Fund		
a Staff Costs	\$21,000	\$15,700
b Materials	\$2,300	\$1,150
Total	\$23,300	\$16,850
3 Communication Fund		
a Inc Adm Hours	\$5,000	\$5,000
b Contract Hours	\$5,000	\$764
c Advertising	\$5,500	\$3,383
d Community Invite	\$2,500	\$2,509
e Website	\$4,500	
Total	\$22,500	\$11,655
Total Ministry Programs	\$75,100	\$50,655
4 Justice Fund	\$15,000	
5 Building Fund	\$66,667	\$32,654
6 Sabbatical Fund	\$6,667	
7 Campaign Expense	\$32,500	\$36,272
Total Allocation 2008	\$174,267	\$119,581