



# Mount Seymour United Church

1200 Parkgate Ave. North Vancouver, B.C.  
[www.mtseymourunited.com](http://www.mtseymourunited.com)



# 2013 Annual Report



## *What We Believe*

*At the heart of our community is a belief that how we live is more important than what we believe. We follow a progressive form of Christianity at Mount Seymour which means among other things:*

### *We take the Bible seriously but not literally.*

*We understand the Bible as a human product, written in the context of two ancient communities. It is a record of how those people understood and experienced God and their life of faith. We use the Bible as a central source of wisdom, inspiration, understanding and guidance for our life.*

### *We follow the Way of Jesus*

*We look to the story of Jesus and the way he lived his life as a model for our own living. We understand Jesus as both a figure of history and a mysterious presence we refer to as Christ within and among us. Through this understanding we gain a deeper sense of what it means to be created in the image of the divine.*

### *We are not alone. God is with us.*

*We call "God" by many names and experience the sacred in a variety of ways. We experience God as something larger than ourselves and yet part of us. We understand God in human form primarily through Jesus.*

### *Our Life Together.*

*We gather in community for support, challenge, accountability and to experience the sacred in a particular way. Journeying with others reminds us of the foundations of the Christian path which include prayer and contemplation; the work of seeking justice for our world and for our earth; and compassionate living. Communal life provides the opportunity to engage the rituals of the Christian tradition, particularly communion and baptism, which help to shape, form and sustain us.*

### *Our Purpose.*

*To be transformed and to be part of transforming our world into a just, peaceful and sustainable earth home.*



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## 2013 Annual Report

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# Report from our Council Chair



In 2014 we celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the building and the congregation whose foresight, leadership and financial stewardship built this church. It gives me great pride to be part of a church community with such inspirational leadership, hardworking staff and committed volunteers all backed by an open and caring congregation.

The purpose of Council is to represent the congregation and support the work of the various teams and committees including; administration, congregational life, mission and outreach, worship and Christian development and ministry and personnel.

In this regard the focus of Council this year has been to particularly support the committees which have been working hard on finding ways the church can continue to provide a variety of spiritual based programs and initiatives in a creative manner not only to meet the spiritual needs of the congregation but also to reach out to the local community.

The two important committees which have been serving in this regard are the (1) Joint Needs Assessment Committee which continues to review and plan sustainable staffing for supporting the church of today and tomorrow and (2) the Building Committee which has been charged with repurposing our building in a cost effective way to better sustain our current ministries and provide for future programs. These committees are faced with challenges which require choices and compromise and so I want to especially thank everyone who has participated and continues to give of their time towards this important work.

On behalf of Council, I would like to acknowledge and thank our dedicated staff, Kathryn Clinton and our ministry team, led by Rev. Nancy Talbot and our associate minister Donna Dinsmore, Anne Ellis, our children's community leader, Dominique Hogan and Marcus Mosely for our gospel choir and Mary Sparks and Lena Dabrusin for our children's music ministry program.

It has been a privilege to serve as Chair and I thank all of the talented members of Council for their service during the year.

It's exciting times as we celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the building and contemplate its future together!

Respectfully submitted, Kelly Vogt

## *Praying*

*It doesn't have to be the blue iris,  
it could be weeds in a vacant lot, or a few small stones;  
just pay attention,  
then patch a few words together  
and don't try to make them elaborate,  
this isn't a contest but the doorway into thanks,  
and a silence in which another voice may speak."*

*~Mary Oliver, Thirst*





## Report from our Minister

### **Don't Build Your House on Sandy Ground** (Matthew 7: 24-27)

2013 was foundational for our church community. As we continued to discern God's call for us as we enter our 25<sup>th</sup> year many hours were spent sitting in circles listening to each other, sharing excitement and concerns, imagining new possibilities, making room for different perspectives and strengthening our relationships.

The Building Team worked tirelessly to consult with our various constituencies to devise a plan to repurpose our sacred space.

A Joint Needs Assessment Committee was struck by Vancouver-Burrard Presbytery to help us consider our staffing needs, our core identity and active values.

With the retirement of Gladys Johnston after over 20 years of service to the Thrift Shop, a Transition Team was appointed both to keep the operation running and to create a new governance structure.

In the midst of all these developments, I sought the permission of Council to create a Core Team to hold the purpose at the center of our work and to help discern next steps. The team members are Laura Staude, Kathryn Clinton, James Fulton, Meg Clarke, Marc Coulombe and joining us in 2014 Roger Brain.

With the financial assistance of another ProVision Grant, Chris Corrigan and Caitlin Frost of Harvest Moon Consultants along with our own Marc Coulombe continue to offer their guidance and support as they help steer us through the changes we are undergoing and still anticipating in a way that is respectful, gracious and enlivening.

While at the national level, the United Church of Canada is undergoing a comprehensive review "to examine the vision and circumstances of The UCC to enable the church to continue to live faithfully in God's world," Mount Seymour is well on its way to reimagining ministry in our changing context.

Through a variety of conversations we have hosted over the last two years a vision is emerging of Mount Seymour as a place and a people who are **Spirit Nurturing, Living Generously and Being Community**, gathered around the core values of:

- Trusting in the Goodness of Life
- Treating Ourselves, Others and our World with Grace and Compassion
- Honouring Each Individual's Spiritual Journey
- Empowering People to Claim Their Spirit-Given Gifts
- Striving to Practice the Way of Jesus

In recognition of the fact that Sunday morning can no longer be the primary doorway into the church, we've been expanding the ways we minister to our community. We've increased programming for those who are "spiritual but not religious." We've developed a greater awareness of the Thrift Shop as a ministry as well as a significant revenue stream. We are becoming a "**mixed economy church**."

As we continue to adapt to and address the changing world around us, we are imagining a new configuration for our building:

**The Thrift Shop** will be a dedicated space that continues to be "a growing community outreach through extraordinary people who share their time and knowledge to support our neighbors. The Thrift Shop is a place to nurture the spirit where all are welcome." \*Thrift Shop Mission Statement

**The Café Space** will become an intentional “community livingroom,” a place of hospitality for Thrift Shop customers and volunteers; community meals; café worship; theological discussions and coffee house type gatherings.

**The Sanctuary** will continue to be used for worship, concerts, film nights and other community gatherings.

The **Multipurpose Room** at the end of the Narthex will be used for meditation and yoga classes, the library, children's community, AA and as a quiet space for families during memorial services. It will have several doors that open onto the narthex extending our capacity to host large events.

**New offices** will be added in the space previously designated for the Thrift Shop and the main office will be renovated to provide space for volunteer receptionists.

The **Preschool Space** will continue to provide early childhood development opportunities for families with young children in our area.

The intent behind these changes (should we actually agree to make them together and our 2013 Annual General Meeting) is to increase our capacity for ministry through a focus on the **Congregation, the Community** and what we are calling **The Center for Spiritual Growth**. These changes will also increase our ongoing viability and sustainability as we both expand our revenue streams and points of interaction with the community.

In and through all of this work we have been about this year we have been nurtured by worshipping together and engaging our faith in small group settings including our wonderful youth and children's communities. Our Life Group ministry is in its second year of operation and 2013 saw two new leaders added to the leadership team.

Mount Seymour has become a place of formation for those entering paid accountable ministry and although we were sad to see Rev. Bethel leave us upon ordination in the spring, we have been blessed yet again with the arrival of Donna Dinsmore and Ingrid Brown. In addition to these gifted ministry candidates it's also worth noting that our Children and Family Ministry Coordinator Anne Ellis has also been discerning a call to Diaconal Ministry.

A personal highlight this year was my acceptance as a participant in the Moderator's Pilgrimage to the **Greenbelt Festival** in Cheltenham, England. The chance to explore creative worship, listen to cutting edge theologians and connect with lay and ordered ministers of all ages from across the country was invigorating. Attending workshops based on the themes of Faith, Justice and Arts along with the 20,000 others in attendance gave me great hope for the future of Christianity and Faith Communities in general.

I'm often heard remarking on my good fortune for the privilege to work with the people with whom I share our ministry and there is good reason for that. Our council, committee and team members, volunteers, staff and people in the pews are exceptionally fine individuals. I am particularly grateful for Kelly Vogt's thoughtful and committed leadership as chair of our Council these last several years. We will miss his wisdom, humour and eye on the bottom line. Nancy Stonkus has also done an excellent job as our recording secretary as well as contributing valuable input to our deliberations. Kathryn Clinton's dedication, skills and pastoral presence along with the fine ministry offered by Bethel Lee, Donna Dinsmore, Anne Ellis, Dominique Hogan, Marcus Mosely, Mary Sparks and Lena Dabrusin make my life at Mount Seymour rich and full.

Ministry among you continues to stretch and excite me. We are on the edge of something new and wonderful. With a foundation firmly rooted in love, possibility and the companionship of one another we can anticipate great things.

Blessings, Rev. Nancy Talbot

## Associate Minister and Music Leader



You appointed me as your Associate Minister in July and I jumped into leadership with both feet in the month of August, leading worship, preaching, and providing music. During the fall my role evolved as Nancy and I sought to match the needs of the Mt Seymour community with my skills and loves. My work includes directing the adult choir, providing music for worship, planning weekly worship with Nancy, preaching once a month, supporting the Prayer Team, working closely with the worship team regarding liturgical arts, organizing Scripture Readers and those leading Prayers of the People, providing leadership in spiritual formation and being a “right hand woman” for our Lead Minister, Rev. Nancy.

I am also focused on pastoral care and feel like a midwife who has observed new energy grow in recent months for this vital part of our community life. In addition to our knitters who make prayer shawls, a Caring Team is now in place to add intentional visits and cards and meals to the prayers of the Prayer Team. The Prayer Team has expanded from praying individuals to a group that reads together (beginning with Richard Rohr’s *Everything Belongs*) and gathers once a month to discuss both our reading and our praying. Many thanks to Mardi Joughin, Sherrill McLeary, Betty Blair, Jen-Beth Fulton, Gillian Cole, Gwen Kendrick, Emma de Jong, Gert and Sylvia Zandberg, Marianne Hansen, Sharon Stevens, Nancy Talbot, Kathryn Clinton and Anne Ellis for your particular care of our community

On the music front, *Joyful Noise* enjoys both singing with each other and singing with and for the congregation. We are always glad when Mary Sparks joins us on her flute, and Bryan Ralph’s brass quintet once again brought joy and energy when they joined us for worship on December 15<sup>th</sup>. Each month we welcome and enjoy Marcus Mosley and Dominique Hogan’s leadership as they lead the Gospel Choir, composed of any and all who wish to join them.



Tucker, the church dog, continues his ministry of presence as well as challenge. He plays with children of all ages and greets with a full body wag. He can also be annoying in meetings and greet with barks that can be misinterpreted. I am convinced that we need Tucker as we continue to ask “what more can Mt Seymour be?” Back “in the day” he wouldn’t have been welcomed at all, and some may still struggle with a dog in the building. But especially in these times of change, I believe Tucker’s “otherness” can bring out the best in us. Thank you for the hospitality you have extended to him and to me!

I’d like to speak a bit more of the choir. They have been extremely flexible in changing their 25-year rehearsal time from Thursday night to Tuesday afternoon and Sunday morning. They answer to *Joyful Noise*, *Voices* or *the Choir*. They have let go of assigned seats and scheduled anthems. They have welcomed a dog to their rehearsals and have been known to run and chase and play with him like children. They’ll sing any genre with organ, piano or no instrumental accompaniment. They’re learning to sing harmony by ear, to expand their vocal range, to improvise, to read different vocal lines, to listen to each other and the piano and themselves, all at the same time!

I believe the choir is a microcosm of “the more” Mt Seymour is living into. As they adjust and adapt to change they are discovering what really matters to them. I’m not sure who was more surprised, they or I, as we gathered the results of small group conversation about our values. Their top priority? To support and enliven the congregation’s worship and singing. They want to be for you!



Voices: Fay Butterfield, Donna Dinsmore, Eunice Findlay, Jane Thomson, Archie Reid, Sylvia Zandberg, Susie Ha, Gillian Cole, and Marlene Plezia

I want to be for you, too, as an attentive “spy,” always on the lookout for life and energy and love and goodness and joy—for God. I long to attend to what God is doing in our community and enter into it, and am grateful to not be alone in that calling. Thanks be!

*Donna Dinsmore*

## Gospel Choir Leaders

It is our 3rd season of our monthly drop in Gospel Choir with **Marcus Mosely and Dominique Hogan**. There were some smaller groups of singers at the beginning of the season, but since January we have seen the choir consistently with 20+ people turning out. Marcus bring such a rich history and background as well as his amazing voice and leadership to the music. It has been helpful to invite people to come on Sunday even if they cannot attend the Thursday rehearsal. We are grateful to Dan Morrison for volunteering his time to play drums every month for Gospel Sunday.

Submitted by Dominique Hogan





# Children and Family Ministry Co-ordinator



Anne Ellis

2013 was a great year for our Children's Community. We had a very successful Advent Fundraising campaign in 2012 that led us into 2013 with enthusiasm and encouragement. We continued to explore stories from the bible with the [Holy Moly!](#) Curriculum.

In February four children from our Community and me, Anne Ellis, attended the **Imagine: Children's Retreat** held at Stillwood Retreat Center near Cultus Lake BC. There were over 80 other children and well over 30 leaders from various United Churches in the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island. It was a lot of fun with all the kids not wanting to leave and confident they would return in 2014 (hint for 2014: they all did, along with 3 more kids).

For Pentecost in 2013 the children decided that you couldn't celebrate the God's Birthday (yes, we tried to explain that it *really* meant the birth of the church) without cupcakes. So our leaders and a few parents baked dozens of cupcakes for Pentecost. The children had a wonderful time decorating the cupcakes with red icing and sprinkles and then sharing their creations with the congregation.



Our year officially ended with the legendary Chicken BBQ and family picnic at the end of June. Despite a few sprinkles of rain everyone enjoyed themselves with good food, fun games and time spent with family and friends.

Summer is generally a slower time at Mount Seymour, but not in July of 2013. We co-hosted a **Summer Day Camp** with Highlands United Church in the last week of July. 15 children attended camp. Our Theme was "Take A

Big Breath" and we spent the week learning stories about breath, wind and air in the Bible, made crafts, conducted science experiments, played games, went to the beach, made kites and pretzels and... the list is endless. Our major trip of the camp with taking the bus to Fly Over Canada at Canada Place in Vancouver, which was awesome.

We ended our week with a feast and a movie, Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs. The kids were so tuckered out from their amazing week a few fell asleep in the pews of the sanctuary.

Camp was so much fun at the end of the week we booked a date to have camp again in 2014: July 21 -25<sup>th</sup> by the way – mark your calendars. Thank you so very much to the volunteer leaders from Mt. Seymour UC: Kate, Calder and Lorraine.



The fall of 2013 began with talking with the kids about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and our history with the Residential Schools. We participated in making tiles and birthday cards for The First Nation Peoples who had been a part of the Residential Schools as children.

We continued on with using the Holy Moly! Curriculum and learned Stories from Genesis and Exodus before Advent.

Prior to Advent I went to Winnipeg for a three week Learning Circle with the Centre for Christian Studies. The fearless leaders of CC were their usual fantastic selves during this time and did a great job with the kids, as always.



For Advent this year we chose another Gift from the Gifts with Vision Catalogue ([giftswithvision.ca](http://giftswithvision.ca)). This time it was Goats, for an Agricultural school in Zimbabwe. We were extremely successful with our "How many Goats will fit on our Roof?" campaign and raised over \$1,160. Thank you so much for everyone's generosity! Also a huge thank you to the many volunteers who helped make the fundraiser possible.

December also included our first ever **Community Christmas Encounter**, an event organized by our theological field education student Ingrid Brown and Cove community leaders Stef Green and Lori Keith along with a team of volunteers from Mount Seymour and the Cove. Modeled after "Messy Church", this was a great evening of crafts, dress up, music, storytelling, friendship, and delicious food.



Jen-Beth Fulton, Rev. Nancy and Rev. Marianna Harris at the Christmas Encounter

As always, Children's Community would not be possible without the help and commitment of our volunteer team of Leaders. They work so hard to lead our children, making Sunday mornings fun and educational. They make my job easier and bring so much love to leading; I would be lost without them.

Thank you: Brenda, Anna, Jen Beth, Michelle, Tasha, Marianne and incoming for 2014 Mary and Matt. Also thank you to our regular volunteers: Sharon and Ward. Also thank you to the many other parents and community members who have given their time to Children's Community.

Submitted by Anne Ellis

### *The God Who Only Knows Four Words*

Every Child  
Has known God,  
Not the God of names,  
Not the God of don'ts,  
Not the God who ever does  
Anything weird,  
But the God who only knows four words  
And keeps repeating them, saying:  
"Come dance with Me,"  
Come Dance.  
~Hafiz



## Church Administrator

*"If the only prayer you said was thank you, that would be enough."  
~Meister Eckhart, 14th*

Every year when I sit down to write my report, I am filled with gratitude for the staff and many volunteers that make this such a wonderful place to work. There are many of you that I have worked with for 10 years while others, such as Donna Dinsmore, have just come into our midst in the last year. I want you to know that I appreciate each and every one of you and all that you do for this place and each other.

In 2013, after years of dreaming together about *What Else Mount Seymour Can Be*, the Building Team brought forth building plans to reflect the dreams and needs of the congregation and its ministries. There are so many great features of the plan. I won't repeat what is in this report but my favourite feature is the proposed welcoming Café space as you enter the building.

A rewarding part of my job here involves sharing our building with the wider community. Hundreds of people use our space every week; the congregation, community choirs, preschool families, Thrift Shop customers and volunteers, Sparks, concert patrons and more. I had the opportunity last spring, along with James Fulton, to meet with representatives of our regular user groups and get feedback. Many of the groups have been here since we opened 24 years ago. All of the groups appreciated being able to use the space and wanted to remain here. High praise that reminded me of what an important part of the community MSUC is.

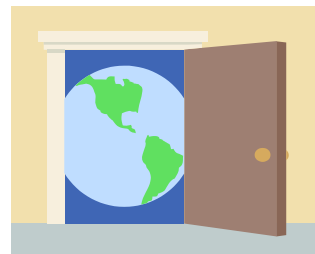
I want to thank everyone who contributes to the smooth running of the office and building. I can't mention you all but here are a few that I have worked closely with this year: the Administration Team and others for all they do from fixing the dishwasher, repairing leaks, taking care of our grounds to working on the plans to renovate our space. On the accounting side; our Treasurer, Doug Querns; Fay Butterfield, our envelope steward and Sue Dahlo for making the weekly bank deposits.

I also want to thank the Ministry and Personnel Committee under the leadership of Laura Staude for providing such a supportive and encouraging work environment. On behalf of all the staff, I want to thank our Council and the M & P Committee for The Staff Appreciation Gathering held at Laura Staude's home on June 16. It was an evening of celebration and gratitude for the gifts that staff bring to this place.

I feel blessed to be able to work with such a "divine" community of faith. I am inspired by your commitment of time and resources as well as your way of being with one another. Thank-you.

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*



# Worship and Christian Development Team



The Worship Team has had a busy 2013 and we think that the worship and programs have shown the growth and excitement going on at Mount Seymour!

## **Sunday Morning Worship**

Sunday morning worship has been thoughtful, engaging and nourishing for the soul.

For Lent, we followed the theme – “Will You Come and Follow Me” – with a number of people sharing their Lenten practices. In September, we dedicated the month to Reconciliation. Many members of the congregation attended the service and the Walk for Reconciliation through downtown Vancouver in very inclement weather! Finally, our Advent theme was “Practicing Presents: Receiving the Gifts of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love”.

We were blessed to have a high quality of guest preachers which included Marcus Mosely, Rev. Marianna Harris, Rev. Brian Thorpe and our own Bethel Lee and Donna Dinsmore.

Through all of this, we need to thank Carol Pettigrew for the amazing banners and art work that brighten and bring meaning to the sanctuary and everyone else who makes the sanctuary the welcoming place that it is for us on Sunday mornings.

Mount Seymour United has become a wonderful place for faith to grow and discernment to take place. On May 25, our associate minister, Bethel Lee, was ordained after spending her period of training and discernment with us. We are so pleased to have been a part of Bethel’s journey! Now we have been blessed by the presence of Donna Dinsmore as our associate minister and music minister. We are constantly amazed by her gifts, her kindness and her enthusiasm for our congregation. She is also going to be ordained in 2014. Our own Anne Ellis is also discerning a call toward diaconal ministry and taking courses in Winnipeg while working with our children’s community.

Finally, we are also pleased to welcome Ingrid Brown who is doing her field study with us from VST. She has been a great addition to the team, helping during worship and taking on a community project of a community dinner and worship in the Christmas season.

All in all, an amazing year in worship!

## **Music Ministry**

Music is one of the threads that holds our Sundays together and we are so grateful for the many forms that the music ministry takes. From January to June, we had Dominique Hogan as our Music Minister who provided our Sunday morning music leadership with her talent and her smile. She and our Joyful Noise adult choir take care of our music ministry most Sundays. In September, Donna Dinsmore took on these responsibilities and the Joyful Noise continues to blossom and the music continues to engage all who attend services.

Our community gospel choir continues under the amazing direction of Marcus Mosely and Dominique Hogan. We have had some truly inspiring and moving worship with his leadership and look forward to hearing the choir and having his leadership approximately once a month.

The children's choir, under the direction of Mary Sparks and Lena Dabrusin, put on an amazing musical production this spring and the children provide us with continuing joy and hope.

We also have been fortunate and would like to thank our guest pianists: Julian Pattison, Lonnie Delisle and Caitlin Hayes. Thanks as well to Solidarity Notes Labour Choir who sang at worship on March 17 and the Brass Quintet with Tom Parr, Joanne Maryt, Rob Toren, Tom Koven and our very own Bryan Ralph who played on December 15.

## Children's Community

Our Children's Community continues to grow under the able leadership of Anne Ellis with her loyal volunteers. They are continuing on with the Holy Moly curriculum where the children get to view a short video which has drawn characters acting out the bible story that they are studying. The kids then break into age appropriate groupings to discuss the video and have response time when they can do art work, play or other creative time that allows them to express themselves with respect to the ideas they have learned from the video



**Christmas Eve 7 pm Service:** Kelly Vogt, Ella Vogt, Sarah Vahlos, Sarah, Ward and Olivia Branch, Angus Taylor, Heather and Michael Andrews, Nathan Talbot.

We were able to renew our summer day camp for children this year in partnership with Highlands United. It was held from July 29 to August 2 and was a wonderful success with more than 15 children in attendance.

Thank you to the many volunteers who have helped in the Children's Community this year, either before the Summer, during the Summer or this Fall and Winter. You are so very much appreciated!!

## Spiritual Development

### Life Groups

In 2012, we launched this exciting initiative with the intention of building stronger relationships between congregational members and providing an opportunity for people to explore questions of faith. Small groups of about 8 people met in a leader's home once a month to discuss faith questions. Some topics in 2013 were:

- |                                    |                                      |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Where or what is heaven?           | What does it mean to be saved?       |
| What does forgiveness mean to you? | What does it mean to be a Christian? |
| Is resurrection real?              | What does god mean to you?           |

Thanks to David Ney, Anne Ellis, Jill Blair and Marc Coulombe for leading groups in 2013.

### Being Peace Workshops led by Caitlin Frost

MSUC hosted a day long workshop on **May 4, 2013** that over 40 people attended as well a workshop series of **5 evenings in the Fall** with 25 participants. Both workshops introduced a process developed by Byron Katie called [The Work](#). The Work is a simple yet profoundly powerful process for working with your own stressful thinking patterns and limiting beliefs to open space for more peace, happiness, wise action and clarity in your life and work. Due to the success and demand for this kind of program, we will continue to offer Being Peace Workshops in the future.

### Soul Collage Workshops

Thanks to Carol Pettigrew for leading monthly evening workshops and to Merrilee Thompson for leading a workshop on April 27. **The SoulCollage®** process enables us to explore our inner selves and to connect with the Divine through images that speak powerfully to each of us.

### Writing Through Grief and Loss - Oct 19

Ray McGinnis led a workshop on how journal writing can be helpful in dealing with loss and grief.

### Lectio Divina Group

Thanks to Anne Ellis for leading this ongoing sacred word meditation group that started in September. The group continues to meet on Fridays at 9:15 am and is open to everyone.

This year has shown many of the fruits of the labours of years' past and I look forward to another extremely successful year to come! Congratulations to everyone in the Mount Seymour family!

Respectfully submitted: The Worship and Christian Development Team – Nancy Talbot, Donna Dinsmore, Anne Ellis, Jen Beth Fulton, Bette Shippam, Carol Pettigrew, David Ney, Catherine Branch



Children's Choir Leaders, Mary Sparks and Lena Dabrusin.



Bottle of Joy Musical held on May 12

## Children's Choir Report

This past year, Mount Seymour United Children's Choir has experienced a lot of new energy and growth. In September 2012, choir leader, Mary Sparks, was joined by Musical Theatre Performer, Lena Dabrusin. Early in the year, the group was re-named "**Shout it Out!**" to reflect the groups' desire to express themselves through song.

Highlights from the year include: partnering with Joyful Noise, putting on their own play with music, *Bottle of Joy*, at worship on May 12, and exploring music through rhythm, movement and theatre.

Mary and Lena are extremely proud of what the children have accomplished this year and look forward to new music adventures next year. "**Shout it Out!**" **meets Wednesdays from 3:45 to 4:45** and welcomes any child between the ages of 6 and 12 who has an interest in fun through music!

# Congregational Mission and Outreach Team Report



Team members Dilys Sostad, Rev. Marianna Harris, Dr. Kathy McKay, Barbara Ralph, Ellen Muirhead and Lisa Reinders.

The Congregational M&O Team provides support, leadership and accountability for local and global outreach and mission initiatives.

The **Seymour Access Bus** program was developed in 2010. It is a partnership with Parkgate Community Services Society (PCSS) to provide door-to-door transportation for frail and/or isolated seniors east of the Seymour River. This service to Lynn Valley Mall is an enormous success with weekly trips that are at capacity. Our funding to support this program will end in 2014 so we will work with PCSS to ensure this program continues with minimal costs to Seniors. MSUC contributed \$12,414 in 2013 from the Growth Fund to the bus program.

**Outreach to First United Church** continues to be the focus of many programs. Joyce Jones coordinates the biweekly production of 12 loaves of **sandwiches** that are sent to First United Church. Katherine McKay provides **Ready Readers** so that community members are able to read and fill out important forms. The M&O Team monitors the needs of First United via their weekly bulletins and tries to accommodate these needs with items from the Thrift Shop. These items are delivered by Alan Furniss on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month. A total of \$20,869 was donated to First from individual donations (\$845) and the Thrift Shop (\$20,024).



First United Picnic at Panorama Park on August 16, 2013

**Christmas in June** and October's **World Food Day** are also opportunities for the congregation to donate food and money which is then sent to First United Church on the downtown eastside.

Annually in August MSUC, in cooperation with First United, hosts a **picnic** and activities in Deep Cove for residents of the downtown eastside. They really look forward to this event and the participation was well over 120 this year.

In the month of December the **Giving tree** goes up and is the focus for collection of much needed clothing and toiletry items for First United and The North Shore Lookout Shelter.

Support of the **Thrift Shop** continues with a weekly tea service on Thursdays and annually there is a **Thrift Shop Christmas Tea** for the patrons. The **Maundy Thursday pot luck dinner** in March for Thrift Shop patrons was well attended by over 100 people and coordinated by Kathryn Clinton and Dilys Sostad.

This past year we have developed a process for the discernment of future proposed M&O activities and social justice initiatives called "**Project Discernment.**"

We continue to raise the awareness of our congregation about [The United Church Mission & Service Fund](#) . In 2013, the generous people of Mt. Seymour gave \$18,997 to the Mission and Service Fund. Here are some ways in which our donations of money helped others: building a well at a school in Nega Nega, Zambia; supporting participation of leaders at the Greenbelt Festival in England; and supporting the Longhouse Ministry with First Nations people in East Vancouver. In addition the children of the church raised enough money during December to buy 38 goats (\$1,168) for a school in Zimbabwe through the Gifts With Vision.

The Mission and Outreach Team has set a goal of \$20,000 for Mission and Service Fund givings for 2014. The Team is also trying to raise the number of givers to the M & S Fund from 28% to 38% of those who support the church financially. Let's continue working together to support the United Church in action. The current quarterly **Mandate magazine** and the **Gifts with Vision** giving catalogue are made available for the congregation to peruse.

### **Truth and Reconciliation Week - September 16-22**

The congregation marked this historic process of healing and reconciliation in the following ways:

- On **June 9**, we invited Rev. Brian Thorpe, who has served the national church as an advisor on Residential Schools, to preach on the issues surrounding the schools.
- **August 26**, Donna Dinsmore hosted a film and discussion night to learn more about the issues. The film shown was *Fallen Feather*, a documentary about Indian Industrial Residential Schools. We invited the wider community as well as some residential school survivors and their families.
- On **September 15**, we held a Truth and Reconciliation service. Children and adults painted tiles that became part of a large mosaic and made birthday cards to recognize the birthdays not celebrated in the schools.
- Many members of the congregation attended the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Hearings, held in Vancouver from **Sept. 16-22**, to help bear witness to the stories told by residential school survivors.
- On **Sunday, Sept. 22**, MSUC cancelled worship and encouraged the congregation to attend a service at St. Andrews Wesley and to participate in the Walk for Reconciliation following the service. About 45 MSUC members joined with thousands of people for the Walk.

Finally, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to our newest members; Alan Furniss and Rev. Marianna Harris and a huge heartfelt thank-you to Joyce Jones and Bryan Ralph who have retired from the team after many, many years of service.

I am excited about the possibilities that 2014 will bring and I want to thank Ellen Muirhead, Barbara Ralph, Dilys Sostad, and of course my Co-chair Lisa Reinders for their dedication to the Mission and Outreach Team.

Lastly, enormous gratitude and thanks to all those volunteers who ensure the success of the M&O programs.

Respectfully submitted, Katherine McKay Co-Chair



# The Thrift Shop Report

**Mission Statement :** We create growing community outreach through extraordinary people who share their time and knowledge to support our neighbors. The Thrift Shop is a place to nurture the spirit, all are welcome.



Transition Team co-chairs, Carol Kelly and Margie Nelson

This year for the Thrift Shop has been a year of changes which have been both challenging and exciting. We started the year with all volunteers doing the tasks as established over the past year(s) until at the Executive Meeting in mid March 2013. Gladys Johnston who had been Co-ordinator of the Shop for 25 years announced that she was retiring this position as of April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013. As you can understand this was a shock to us all. Where do we go from here? How do we operate? How do we know what to do? It became clear that Gladys did not intend to work with the Thrift Shop after that date. We were on our own.

With this development we needed to restructure the Executive.

We gathered together a group of volunteers who represented the many facets of the Shop to create a Transition Team

which is composed of the following: Anne De Vent, Barbara Ralph, Barbara Waldie, Bonnie Wudrick, Carol Kelly, Dilys Sostad, Joan Fowler, Linda Smith, Margie Nelson, Meg Clarke, Kathryn Clinton, Nancy Talbot and Katherine McKay (Mission and Outreach representative). This group has met many times over the past 9 months and has developed a good working model to move the Thrift Shop forward.

Thanks to the assistance of many people we had a most successful year. Continuing and new volunteers who perform many regular weekly roles have added to this success. Their work includes such diverse tasks as recycling; bike repairs; electrical and musical repairs; renewing dolls and toys; recycling and sorting bags; silver polishing; book sorting/distribution; cashiers and packers; sorters; pricers. There are also the set up teams for Thursdays (and special events) and tea/coffee makers for the volunteers. Without them and the many hours that the over 80 volunteers contribute we would not be able to operate and be the success that we are today. We especially acknowledge and thank Gladys Johnston who established many of the routines we still follow.

## Others:

We continue to work with Disabilities and Training Placements within the community who place men and women with us for work experience and appreciate all those involved in this worthwhile venture. We are working on contacting more agencies who handle recycled items in hopes of reducing the amount of garbage we produce. Information from any members/volunteers who can assist us this way would be greatly appreciated. Every week we have a placement from Triumph Placement Agency help our Thursday set up team.

Many other volunteers continue to work with us in transporting many loads of clothing to immigrants and charity agencies that need items we are unable to sell at the Thrift Shop. Thank you all.

## Events:

Our annual **Maundy Thursday dinner** on March 28 continued to be a success which is under the direction of the Mission & Outreach Team. They served dinner to over 100 customers and volunteers.

**Art & Jewelry Sale** was held on Saturday, September 28 and was well attended. We also sold our jewelry along with Christmas items in connection with the Men's Turkey Luncheon on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. It was felt to be a good way to expose members of the community who cannot attend the Thursday Thrift Shop days.

**Christmas Tea** – held the last Thursday the Shop was open in December – sponsored by the Mission & Outreach Team, who supplied lots of wonderful Christmas goodies and tea for the customers (and volunteers) - it was appreciated and enjoyed by all.

**The Tea Shop**, also operated by the Mission and Outreach Team, continues to be a wonderful community for the customers of the Thrift Shop on Thursdays. It is open from 2-5 p.m. each Thursday and enables customers to sit and chat while having a cup of tea or coffee.

Finally we want to express our sincere thanks to Kathryn Clinton who has supported us, and continues to do so, in this challenging year of changes... THANKS

### Financial Report

Total Revenue	\$ 102,375
less Expenses	<u>2,054</u>
	\$ 100,320

First United Donation (20%) \$ 20,064

Carol Kelly & Margie Nelson,  
Co-chairs, Executive, Thrift Shop

## Gladys' Dream Continues to Thrive



Gladys Johnston, won the 2011 YWCA Judge's Choice Award in recognition of her contribution to Seymour community.

One of the key characteristics of a good leader is that their ideals and objectives continue after they decide to hand over the reins. Gladys Johnston founded our Thrift Shop more than 20 years ago, first just in the storage room, an awkward space with no windows. Over the years, success brought the need for more space, especially dedicated space.

Gladys retired in 2013: a momentous change for the management of the Thrift Shop. Her dreams however live on for the 80 volunteers who give so much of their time and dedication to her vision of providing community, providing quality second-hand goods to those who need them, and assisting many other local charities.

Our final challenge to achieve Gladys' dreams is to create the dedicated space she knew had become necessary.

Submitted by Meg Clarke,  
Member of Church Council and Thrift Shop Transition Team

# Refugee Sponsorship



Marwa and Wissam on Sept 12, 2013

In November, 2011 Mount Seymour United Church agreed to co-sponsor a young Iraqi-Palestinian refugee who was stateless and therefore trapped in Damascus, Syria. Our aim was to bring Marwa O'da to the safety of Canada and her fiancé, Wissam. It was a frightening and desperate two years, but finally on Sept 10, 2013 our hoped for outcome was realized. After 2 full days of travel (Damascus to Beirut by bus and then flights via Istanbul and Toronto) Marwa arrived in Vancouver.

The reunion was heart-warming and inspiring. Local and national media celebrated the love story that came out of war torn Syria. It was one of those rare instances where "love" conquered all and everyone shared in Marwa's "very big happiness".

The happiness came about because many people worked very hard to make the dream a reality. Mount Seymour United opened the door to its possibility. Then as we waited that last year, Laverne Gfroerer steered us through the "Passages" fundraiser - an unexpected journey that revealed what is truly possible with the support of a loving community. Together Laverne, Highlands United Church, new and old friends made Marwa's passage to a financially secure future possible. On June 29<sup>th</sup>, after another good friend

assured Marwa's immigration interview, South Burnaby United held the fundraising concert, "Bringing Marwa Home". Collectively, countless individuals contributed prayer, energy, furnishings and over \$21,000 in funds.

On Sept 12, the couple signed a marriage license with a local iman (Muslim cleric), although they did not consider themselves married until their wedding party. On Oct 5, South Burnaby United held a bridal shower and on Oct 11 Como Lake United Church hosted the wedding party. Friends, family and a loving community made sure the celebrations included flowers, decorations, music, food and a beautiful wedding cake.

Marwa, now living in Burnaby with her husband, is at school improving her English ... but her "very big happiness" remains strong and clear. The joy of this love story continues to prove as contagious as the hope it embodied.

I want to thank Mount Seymour for sponsoring Marwa, to Kathryn Clinton for managing the fund and to Fay Butterfield for managing the donations and issuing so many tax receipts. We all (I especially) really do appreciate it; I could not do this without you.

Thank you one and all.

In gratitude,  
Heather Macdonald, Refugee Fund Administrator

# Administration Team Report



## Space Optimization Project

This project is by far the most challenging and exciting project the Admin Team has been involved with. Over the last 2 or 3 years it had become apparent that we have been bulging at the seams, mainly as a result of the remarkable success of the Thrift Shop but also as we expand our ideas of what it means to be a church into the multi-user, multifunction building we see ourselves becoming.

In January 2013, a **Building Team** (James Fulton, Steve Macdonald, Kathryn Clinton and Wendy Alexander) was formed. In February, this team met with Wendy Alexander, an architect from our congregation, to discuss our space issues and possible improvements to the building. Based on this wish list that took into account all the ideas, dreams and needs expressed at congregational meetings over the last 2 years, Wendy used her creative talents to draft some drawings of what might be possible for our building. The drawings were presented at our Annual General Meeting in February 24, 2013.

In March, we produced a 5 page Building Use Questionnaire and met with all our users to obtain their feedback of current and future plans plus their degree of satisfaction with our relationship. For me these interviews were both critical and rewarding and we have tabulated the results for input into the design process. The one common theme was how pleased all users are to be a part of our building community!

Based on feedback from the congregation and other user groups after the Annual General Meeting, the Building Team presented a plan to renovate the building and remain within the existing footprint on **October 26** at a congregational gathering, What Else Can MSUC Be? The plan included upgrades to our current 25 year old space; a large gathering space (multipurpose space) at the north end of the lobby, a dedicated space and connected space for the Thrift Shop, a cafe space as you enter the building, 2 additional offices and an early childhood space that would remain in the north half of Parkgate Hall.

The plans were well received but there were some concerns about the reduction in size of Parkgate Hall. The Building Team went back to the drawing board and Wendy came up with a plan that expanded out the front of the building to house the Thrift Shop for an additional \$150,000 that would enable us to keep Parkgate Hall intact. In the end, Council felt that the additional cost was too high and recommended that we proceed with the original plan.

## Other Items

Our annual **May 11 Clean Up day** was a great success with the weather cooperating beautifully and over 45 wonderful people showing up to lend a hand.

Our biggest expenditure this year was the **replacement of the heating system** in the sanctuary after it broke down last spring at a cost of about \$15,000.

In recognition of the upcoming **25th anniversary** of our venerable building in 2014 we are in the process of revisiting some of the more important maintenance decisions, with their associated costs, which we have made over the years in order to reassess their current validity over the long term.



Peter Muirhead at the Spring Cleanup

**Some of these include the following:**

New estimates for protective painting and repair of the building outside envelope and also the inside areas not recently repainted such as the Sanctuary walls and ceiling.

New estimates for both maintaining of the existing Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning Systems [HVAC] Systems as well as full replacement of all the four units.

New estimates for the remaining life and expected costs to replace our roofing. [Happy to report no roof leaks in over two plus years since our last small repairs!] Guttering replacement is also being estimated as a potential future liability.

Continuation of the greening of our building by lighting replacement, installation of sensors and timing devices for heating and lighting control. This was started 2 years ago and we are still struggling to get satisfactory completion of our lighting replacement from BCH contactors.

Modification to our parking lot overhead lighting circuitry and outside security lighting - [one of our largest users of power at present]

Replacement of the green storage container with a larger, wood-sided, ventilated "garden" storage shed in the same approximate area.

Upgraded, low cost security surveillance externally and internally.

Full integration of our sound system and that of the Cove, which we have now inherited, in order to produce the best quality sound for our very successful Friday Night Coffee house performances.

Updated review of a motorized remote blind system over the sanctuary skylight versus movable panel systems to reduce intensity of sunlight to the projector screen.

Updated modifications to the choir stall and organ area.

Review of our insurance contract scope and ensuring that we are getting the best value for our coverage.



Pat Morrice works in the garden at the Spring Clean-up

Thanks to everyone who helped out this year; at the spring cleanup, with the gardening and with all those odd jobs that needed to be done. Please feel free to contact me or anyone on Administration Team if you have any questions, would like to join the team or volunteer.

Submitted by James Fulton on behalf of the Administration Team  
(Steve Macdonald, Gladys Johnston, Kathryn Clinton, Stan Joughin and James Fulton)

*"The day the power of love overrules the love of power,  
the world will know peace."  
~ Mahatma Gandhi*

# Congregational Life Team Report

The Team provides support and leadership in areas of new members, communication and pastoral care and brings the congregation together for fun and fellowship.

## Connecting with our Community

### Online Communication

Our [website](#) continues to be an important connection with the community. On average, there are **500 visits** per month with about half of those from visitors new to the site. Popular pages are *Music and Events*, *Who We Are* and *Sermons*. This year we added a **Facebook** page to promote events and programs at the church. [Click through](#) and like us. We need friends!

We have about **275 people who receive our weekly email**. This has become a key form of communication with the congregation and has helped eliminate the need to hand out written announcements.

### Welcome Team

Since 2008, our Welcome Team has grown to 25 volunteers under the leadership of Margie Nelson. We continue to receive great feedback from newcomers and regulars about what a welcoming place this is. The team is always looking for Welcomers on Sunday Mornings. Whether you are old or new to the church, welcoming is a great way to meet people and widen your circle of friends. Margie is leaving us in 2014 and Gladys Johnston ([johnstongladys@hotmail.com](mailto:johnstongladys@hotmail.com)) will replace her as Team Leader. Many thanks to Margie for her leadership for the past six years. We will miss you!

### Saturday Morning Breakfast Groups

The Men's and Women's Breakfast Groups, a tradition at Mount Seymour, continue to meet on alternate Saturday mornings for good food and fellowship. It is always a unique and fun way of starting the weekend. Contact Alan Furniss ([aandkfurniss@gmail.com](mailto:aandkfurniss@gmail.com)) and Gillian Cole ([doggerel@shaw.ca](mailto:doggerel@shaw.ca)) if you are interested in joining a group.

### Church Library and Reading Group



Our library has become a space not just to sign out books but for fellowship. It welcomes not only church members but our neighbours who use our space to gather, for study, practice and meetings.

We are looking forward to this "space for fellowship" continuing in once our newly renovated building is completed.

Our reading group continues with its monthly meeting held at the Atrium across from the church. Members come together to share and enjoy each other's ideas along with tea and cookies.

The library is so much more than books!

Contact Sylvia ([smandryk@shaw.ca](mailto:smandryk@shaw.ca)) if you would like to help with the library or to join the reading group.

Submitted by Sylvia Zandberg, MSUC Librarian

## 2013 Fundraisers and Events

### Deep Cove Coffee Houses

The Deep Cove Coffee House has been well established in the community for several years and moved to our church in 2011 when St. Clare-in-the-Cove Anglican Church closed. The Coffee House monthly concerts are generally held on the third Friday of the month ([check our website for future dates](#)). For admission of \$10, you can enjoy a great concert by well known local musicians, home baking and the best coffee in the Cove. This is a fundraiser for our church and we are always looking for volunteers to help during the concert and to bring home baking. Last year, the Coffee House raised over \$2,800 for the church. Thanks to Jane Osborne, Pat Newton, Kathy Francis, Linda Bates and volunteers from community that help to make the Coffee Houses such a success.



Mount Seymour United Church  
presents  
**RAISING OUR VOICES TO END POVERTY**  
All profits going to the North Shore  
**Lookout**  
SOLUTIONS TO HOMELESSNESS  
**a multi-choir concert!**  
Burstin' with Broadway  
The Gathering Place  
Julie Blue's Singers  
NORTH SHORE CHORUS  
Mt. Seymour United's Joyful Noise and Shout it Out!  
**Saturday April 27th at 7:30pm**  
Tickets: \$10 Each  
donations of some new socks/underwear, or food donation for the Lookout Emergency Aid Society graciously accepted.

### Raising our Voices Concert- April 27

The sanctuary was filled with the joyful music of community choirs; Burstin with Broadway, Singspiration, North Shore Chorus and The Gathering Place as well as MSUC's Joyful Noise and Shout it Out (children's choir). Together we raised \$2,880 for the North Shore Lookout Shelter. Many thanks to all the choirs and to Dominique Hogan for organizing such a wonderful community fundraiser.

### Church Picnic- June 23

The BBQ chicken was great as usual and the potluck salad and desserts were wonderful. Thanks to Alan Furniss for ordering the chicken, Ward Branch and Matt Branch for organizing the games and everyone who brought salads, desserts and helped out.

Mount Seymour United Church  
1200 Parkgate Avenue  
North Vancouver, BC  
To purchase tix  
call: 604-929-1336

Produced with help from  
Burstin' with Broadway  
&  
**THE DUGOUT**  
DROP IN CENTRE



### Parkgate Family Day - September 7

Thanks to Frank Luba, Helen Talbot, Joan Fowler and Gladys Johnston who handed out freebies and flyers at our table. It was a great opportunity to connect with the community.

### What Else Can Mount Seymour Be? - October 26

About 60 people from the congregation and ministries of our church spent the day together. They reflected on a revitalized articulation of our purpose and core values, received and discussed a plan to repurpose our building and deepened our life together.

### Wreath Making Event - December 1

All ages gathered after worship for lunch and made an Advent wreath to celebrate the four Sundays of Advent at home.

### Turkey Lunch, Thrift and Bake Sale – December 8

Thanks to everyone (cooks, bakers, servers, sellers,...) who helped make this such a fun and successful community event. Together we raised \$880 at the lunch, \$900 at the Bake Sale and \$600 at the Thrift Sale for a total of \$2,380. A special thanks to Peter Muirhead who organized the lunch.



Ella and Ingrid Brown at the Wreath making Event on Dec. 1

Submitted by Kathryn Clinton

# Ministry and Personnel Committee Report



The year began with Nancy Talbot and Bethel Lee sharing the leading of worship at Mount Seymour United. With Bethel justly awarded ordination and stepping onto a new path with a new congregation at Ryerson United, MSUC began a Joint Needs Assessment journey to determine the best way to serve and nurture the Mount Seymour Community.

Early in the Joint Needs Assessment process the team decided to offer a one year appointment for an associate minister while we allowed time for more in-depth consideration of MSUC staffing needs. With incredible fortune we found Donna Dinsmore who accepted the appointment and who has shared the leading of worship with Nancy during the second half of the year. Donna has brought fresh insights and energy to our worship, pastoral support group, music programs and the rest of the Mount Seymour community.

Our Children's Community continues to be led by Anne Ellis who has a unique appreciation for the spirituality of children and adolescents. She helps them to see how their North Vancouver "backyard" is connected to the rest of the world in so many ways.

Our music programs are gifted with the talents of Marcus Mosely, Dominique Hogan and Mary Sparks and Lena Dabrusin. We all benefit from the spirit-renewing songs and sounds they share with us.

MSUC's offering of a family-friendly Christmas celebration open to the whole community was hugely successful and we have Ingrid Brown, our field education student from Vancouver School of Theology, to thank for it. Her creativity and collaboration led MSUC to be a part of many families' shared Christmas celebrations.

This year we look forward particularly to recognizing the work of Nancy Talbot and Kathryn Clinton as they share their trust in the goodness of God with us to allow Mount Seymour to be all that it can be.

In 2014 we are looking forward to celebrating three very special anniversaries:

- the first anniversary we are happy to celebrate at Mount Seymour is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Kathryn Clinton in her role of Church Administrator;
- the second is the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mount Seymour United Church in its current location at 1200 Parkgate with its beautifully designed sanctuary;
- the third anniversary is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Nancy Talbot as Minister at Mount Seymour.

We hope to be joined by as many members of the Mount Seymour Community as possible as we relish a year of extraordinary anniversaries!

**The Ministry and Personnel Committee – Marianne Hansen, Peter Muirhead, Lima Branch, Laura Staude**

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Staude  
Chair of Ministry and Personnel Team



## Board of Trustees



The trustees met once in 2013 and discussed matters of insurance, the registration in the Land Title Office of the varied terms of the congregation's Ventures In Mission mortgage from the national church, and procedures for dealing with any future investments and memorial gifts. Our intention is to meet at least three times a year, in February, June, and October. The current trustees are Ted Butterfield, James Fulton, Gwen Kendrick, and Mike Hetherington; Rev. Nancy Talbot is an *ex officio* member.

The trustees are the legal owners of all the church property, including the land and buildings. Their powers and responsibilities are outlined in the *Manual* of The United Church of Canada and are explained in the *Congregational Trustees Handbook*. The trustees are responsible for ensuring the church property is properly insured. They have personal liability for claims made against the church and its property. They also have responsibility for investing any accumulated assets of the congregation, including bequests. Generally, the trustees will follow the requests of Council.

Mike Hetherington, Chair and Secretary

## Vancouver-Burrard Presbytery Report

There are 22 United Churches that make up the Vancouver-Burrard Presbytery from Bowen Island to Whistler, the North Shore, First United, St. Andrews Wesley and the Longhouse Ministry amongst others. Ministry staff and lay representatives from these 22 churches gather monthly for worship, a meal and a meeting. I have been attending meetings since my appointment as of March 2013.

During my first few meetings, I heard presentations on the following topics:

- Changing cultural trends and the future of the United Church presented by Keith Howard
- How to prepare and participate in the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Walk** held in Vancouver in September 2013.
- Squamish Development Plans for the new "Centrepont" building which will house Sea to Sky Community Services and Squamish United and will be jointly owned by both parties.
- An interactive presentation by a team at Lynn Valley United about plans to redevelop their building
- A presentation by participants, including our own Rev. Nancy Talbot, about the **Greenbelt Festival** in Cheltenham, England in August 2013.

This is an interesting and challenging time to be in leadership in the United Church of Canada. We face the same issues as many other churches and non-profits with declining membership, fewer volunteers and financial resources. On the other hand this has freed church members up to go deeply as to what it means to be church in this time and place. Presbytery is a place where we can share our ideas, plans and dreams for our churches and the communities that we live in. It is has been a rewarding opportunity for me to learn and build relationships with the wider church.

Blessings, Kathryn Clinton



# PASSAGES 2013

## Joining our Congregation

Lisa Reinders

Transfer

## We Remember

James Andrew Brown

William Davidson Mundy

Edna Mae Pirie

Laura May Wells

Donna Newman Ehl

Paul Standish Higgins

## Memorial Service

January 1

January 10

January 19

May 23

July 24

August 22

## *The United Church Creed*

*We are not alone, we live in God's world.*

*We believe in God:*

*who has created and is creating,*

*who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new,*

*who works in us and others by the Spirit.*

*We trust in God.*

*We are called to be the Church:*

*to celebrate God's presence,*

*to live with respect in Creation,*

*to love and serve others,*

*to seek justice and resist evil,*

*to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.*

*In life, in death, in life beyond death,*

*God is with us.*

## Groups Using Our Church During 2013

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  
The Cove Church  
Kumon Educational Institute  
Alcoholics Anonymous and Alanon groups  
Girl Guides (Sparks)  
Blueridge International Chamber Music Kid's Camp

### **Weekly Choirs:**

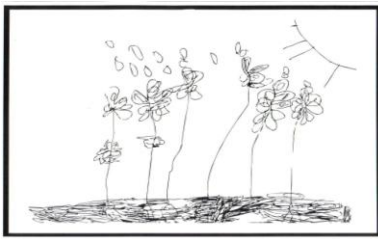
North Shore Chorus –practices and concerts  
Singspiration Choir –practices and concerts

### **Concerts:**

Pro Nova Ensemble (4 concerts per year)  
Seycove Secondary School Community Concerts (monthly)  
Argyle Secondary School  
Universal Gospel Choir  
Marcus Mosely Chorale  
Deep Cove Coffee Houses (monthly)  
Blueridge Music Association  
Vancouver Orpheus Men's Choir  
Music Recitals - various music teachers and groups

Recording sessions  
Quilting Workshops  
Anniversary and Birthday Parties  
Meetings: Strata, Blockwatch, etc.  
All Candidates Meeting  
Election Polls

*"Faith does not need to push the river because faith is able to trust that there is a river.  
The river is flowing. We are in it."  
~Richard Rohr*



## Mount Seymour Child Development Society (Mount Seymour Preschool)

The United Church of Canada has a long-standing tradition of response to the needs of children, whether spiritual, physical or educational. This response is inspired by the teachings of Jesus that, on the one hand, children were deserving of loving attention from adults, and on the other, that children could be sources of both joy and wisdom to their elders. It was from these beliefs that this congregation's commitment to early childhood education sprouted over forty years ago with the inception of what is now Mount Seymour Preschool.

### DID YOU KNOW?

This year we have 66 children participating in our pre-school programs.

We offer programs to children who are 3 and 4 years old.

On Monday, Wednesday and Friday, we have two classes of 4 year olds.

Their class times are: 9:00 – 11:30 and 12:30 – 3:00.

On Tuesday and Thursday, we have two classes of 3 year olds.

Their class times are: 9:00 - 11:15 and 11:45 – 2:00.

With many financial pressures facing young families, we are diligent at keeping the **preschool fees affordable**, so that many children in our area can participate in quality early childhood experiences at Mt Seymour Preschool. The Ministry of Children and Family Services offers financial assistance for families who qualify for subsidy support and we work with families through this process.

The Mount Seymour Child Development Society has a **Bursary Fund**, that when accessed, allows families to participate in our programs if the financial need arises.

We are an **inclusive** preschool. We work closely with families and community agencies, to provide the necessary support that ensures each child has a meaningful and positive preschool experience.

Once again, our preschool families embraced our **Christmas Gift of Giving** project for marginalized people who live in the Downtown Eastside. First United Church provided a Christmas meal for over 300 people and our preschool was responsible for contributing much of the food that went into making that event so successful. First United acknowledged that "the event was memorable and beautiful due to the contributions of many people and groups and Mt. Seymour Preschool played a pivotal role in this day." We are grateful to our families for their generosity as well as having the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others. We also recognize and are thankful for the important work that occurs at First United every day of the year.

We continue to feel very fortunate to have Parkgate Hall as our preschool environment and to be part of the church community. We appreciate and are grateful for being included in the many discussions that have taken place over the past year, regarding the need for more space for the Thrift Shop. We know that there will be more challenges as the church space changes, and we look forward to working in partnership with the church as this occurs.

Thank you for your continued support.



Sincerely,

Gina Gallagher, Ellen Muirhead and Nonie Meger and (Preschool Staff)

# Appendix

## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Mt. Seymour United Church Held at 1200 Parkgate Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C. Sunday, February 24, 2013

The following 39 members/adherents were present;

Roger Brain, Ward Branch, Meg Clarke, Kathryn Clinton, Barbara English, Ian De Jong, Brenda Fawkes, Barry Fenton, Kathryn Ferriss, Joan Fowler, Ken Fowler, Alan Furniss, Joyce Jones, Mardie Joughin, Stan Joughin, Carol, Kelly, Gwen Kendrick, Lorne Leckie, Lowell Leighton, Steve Macdonald, Sherill McLeary, Bill Mathieson, Ellen Muirhead, Margie Nelson, Heather Noisgaard, Doug Querns, Kathy Querns McKay, Barb Ralph, Bryan Ralph, Archie Reid, Lisa Reinders, Dilys Sostad, Bette Shippam, Helen Talbot, Wendy Taylor, Kelly Vogt, Verna Wilson, Gert Zandberg, Sylvia Zandberg.

Chair Kelly Vogt welcomed those present, noted that there was a quorum present, and called the meeting to order at 11.41 am.

**M/S ( D. Sostad/S. Joughin)** that the agenda be approved as presented. **Carried.**

**Rev. Nancy Talbot** opened the meeting with a call to those present to explain, in one word, their experience of the church over the past year and, when this was completed offered up a prayer.

**M/S (W. Branch/G .Kendrick)** that the Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting of March 4,2012 be approved as circulated. **Carried.**

Chair Vogt introduced the Board of Trustees:Mike Hetherington, Ted Butterfield, Gwen Kendrick and James Fulton.

Chair Vogt introduced the 2012 Council Members.

**Team Leaders** for each of the church committees presented brief celebrations of their teams work for the past year and team plans for 2013

**M/S (Barb Ralph/B. Shippam)** that the 2012 Annual Report be received save for the 2013 budget therein. **Carried.**

**M/S (K. Fowler/M.Nelson)** that the Financial Statements for 2012, excluding the budget for 2013 be received. **Carried.**

**M/S (G. Kendrick/S. Joughin)** that the budget for 2013 be accepted as presented. **Carried.**

**MSU Council**

**M/S** (K Clinton/A. Furniss) that the following candidates be elected to serve as the Mount Seymour United Church Council for the fiscal year commencing June 1, 2013.

**Chair** – *Kelly Vogt called for further nominations and, hearing none, declared the following elected by acclamation:*

**Administration ("A") Team Leader** – *James Fulton*

**Congregational Life Team Leader** – vacant

**Mission and Outreach Team Co-Leaders** – *Katherine McKay and Lisa Reinders*

**Worship and Christian Development Team Leader**–*Bette Shippam*

**Ministry and Personnel Committee Chair** – *Laura Staude*

**Presbytery Representative** –*Kathryn Clinton*

**Members-at-Large** – *Meg Clarke, Ward Branch*

**Treasurer** - *Doug Querns*

**Recording Secretary** - *Nancy Stonkus*

**Motion Carried.**

Kelly Vogt thanked Council, specifically retiring members of Council, Dilys Sostad and Steve Macdonald and the dedicated and hard working staff.

Rev. Talbot acknowledged, with thanks, Chair Kelly Vogt, Dilys Sostad, Joyce Jones, Steve Macdonald, all the Council members and staff, Kathryn Clinton, Bethel Lee, Dominique Hogan and Anne Ellis.

Rev. Talbot closed the meeting with a prayer.

**M/S** (A. Furniss/D. Querns) that the meeting adjourned at 1:12 p.m. **Carried**

Kelly Vogt, Chair



Alan Furniss, Acting Recording Secretary



# Mount Seymour United Church

Statement of financial position

December 31, 2013, with comparative figures for 2012 and 2014 budget

(Unaudited)

	2013	2012	2014 Budget
<b>Assets</b>			
Current assets:			
Cash	\$ 14,739	\$ 38,315	\$ 15,000
Short-term investments	208,350	205,735	183,368
Amounts receivable	2,982	12,284	3,000
	<u>226,071</u>	<u>256,334</u>	<u>201,368</u>
Capital assets	1,648,196	1,643,521	1,648,196
	<u>\$ 1,874,267</u>	<u>\$ 1,899,855</u>	<u>\$ 1,849,564</u>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>			
Current liabilities:			
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 21,369	\$ 5,807	21,000
Deferred offerings	-	29,685	-
	<u>21,369</u>	<u>35,492</u>	<u>21,000</u>
VIM loan obligation	305,045	305,045	305,045
Net assets:			
Unrestricted	58,288	57,805	40,346
Restricted - growth building	96,452	120,761	82,452
Restricted - growth senior's bus program	6,192	18,505	-
Restricted - sabbatical	20,000	-	20,000
Restricted - memorial	20,526	20,526	20,526
Restricted - building renovation (sound)	-	-	10,000
Restricted - building renovation	-	-	3,800
Restricted - other	3,244	3,245	3,244
	<u>204,702</u>	<u>220,842</u>	<u>180,368</u>
Invested in capital assets	1,343,151	1,338,476	1,343,151
	<u>1,547,853</u>	<u>1,559,318</u>	<u>1,523,519</u>
	<u>\$ 1,874,267</u>	<u>\$ 1,899,855</u>	<u>\$ 1,849,564</u>

*These financial statements have not been reviewed or audited by a chartered professional accountant.*

*The basis of measurement is not necessarily in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.*

# Mount Seymour United Church

Statement of operations and changes in net assets

For the year ended December 31, 2013, with comparative figures for 2012 and 2014 budget

(Unaudited)

	2013	2012	2014 Budget
<b>UNRESTRICTED</b>			
Unrestricted Revenue:			
Offerings	\$ 174,528	\$ 183,723	\$ 161,500
Thrift shop	102,375	100,125	105,000
Building rentals	37,934	49,690	31,000
Fund raising	5,412	5,054	5,500
Interest	2,591	2,561	2,500
Other	686	1,425	950
	<u>323,526</u>	<u>342,579</u>	<u>306,450</u>
Unrestricted Expenses:			
Salaries and employee benefits	209,402	202,133	217,460
Maintenance	39,578	34,558	38,150
First United donation	20,064	20,025	20,000
Presbytery	11,011	10,144	11,627
Office	10,371	9,162	11,880
Worship and congregational life	9,764	12,082	9,600
Insurance	7,123	7,015	8,000
Thrift shop improvements	2,054	10,207	1,200
Mission and outreach	1,150	1,296	2,175
Miscellaneous	351	941	500
	<u>310,868</u>	<u>307,563</u>	<u>320,592</u>
Excess (deficiency) of unrestricted revenues over expenses	12,658	35,016	(14,142)
Unrestricted net assets, beginning of the year	57,805	22,789	58,288
Transfer to restricted assets - sabbatical	(7,500)	-	-
Transfer to restricted assets - building renovation	-	-	(3,800)
Invested in capital assets	(4,675)	-	-
<b>Unrestricted net assets, end of the year</b>	<b>\$ 58,288</b>	<b>\$ 57,805</b>	<b>\$ 40,346</b>

## RESTRICTED

Restricted Revenue:			
Designated offerings	\$ 12,500	\$ -	\$ 10,000
Transfer from unrestricted assets	7,500	-	3,800
	<u>20,000</u>		<u>13,800</u>
Restricted Expenses:			
Memorial	-	319	-
Growth - senior's bus program	12,313	6,183	6,192
Growth - building	24,309	-	14,000
	<u>36,622</u>	<u>6,502</u>	<u>20,192</u>
Excess (deficiency) of restricted revenue over expenses	(16,622)	(6,502)	(6,392)
Restricted net assets, beginning of the year	163,037	169,539	146,415
<b>Restricted net assets, end of the year</b>	<b>\$ 146,415</b>	<b>\$ 163,037</b>	<b>\$ 140,023</b>

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