



# Crescent Fort Rouge United Church

## “Nurturing the Spirit”

Please join us for worship - Sundays at 10:30am

Advent 2013

### Advent Worship Highlights

- December 1      Communion  
*Advent 1*      *Isaiah 2: 1-5* - swords into ploughshares  
                      *Luke 3: 1-20* - John the Baptist preaches and is jailed
- December 8      *Isaiah 11: 1-10* - the peaceable kingdom  
*Advent 2*      *Luke 1: 26-38* - an angel visits Mary
- December 15     *Isaiah 35: 1-10* - blossoms in the desert  
*Advent 3*      *Luke 1: 39-56* - Mary visits Elizabeth, the Magnificat
- December 22     *Luke 1: 67-79* - Zechariah finds his voice  
*Advent 4*      *Matthew 1: 18-25* - Joseph’s dream
- December 24     Christmas Eve Service

525 Wardlaw Ave at Nassau St N  
 Winnipeg, MB R3L 0L9  
 Phone: 204-475-6011  
 Fax: 204-275-1154  
 Email: [cfruc@mts.net](mailto:cfruc@mts.net)  
 Website:  
[www.crescentfortrouge.ca](http://www.crescentfortrouge.ca)



Ministry Message	2
Tidings from the Treasurer	3
Advent Activities	4-5
Winnipeg Presbytery News & UCW News	6
Community Outreach	7
House Groups & Passages	8
Redevelopment Feasibility Task Group	9
Christmas Gift Ideas	11
Upcoming Events	12

***Rejoice! The Season of Advent is Upon Us!***

In order to receive a charitable donation receipt for income tax purposes all **donations for 2013 must be received in the church office by December 31, 2013.** Thank you!



**Office hours:**  
**9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**  
**Monday to Friday**

**The Church Office will be closed :  
 December 25 & 26, January 1, & February 17**

### Hanging of the GREENS

**Thursday November 28; 5:30 p.m.** onward, our annual pizza-fest and **decorating the sanctuary in greenery.** Families especially welcome. Pizza and drinks provided - bring some fruit or dessert to share.

### PETITIONS

Please check with the Leadership Team or Executive before circulating any petitions in the church. Please give a copy of your petition to any LT member, or send it to the church office. Thank you!



The Lent newsletter submission deadline is **February 17.**

Strange though it may seem, deserts have been a prominent image in my mind of late. I haven't been to one recently – or ever for that matter. I haven't been looking at pictures of sand dunes or even been particularly aware of the lack of rain in recent weeks. It's just that deserts have been the images that have appeared in some of my personal meditation literature of late. My reading has led me to reflect on the desert as an image for some of those dry wilderness experiences we go through from time to time. I must confess, it is not difficult to find those troubling wilderness experiences in life – whether it be my personal life or the life of the community.

Think about it for a moment. Personally we experience those dry times that come about because of our overly busy lives. We just get weary and can't find the energy we need to do all the things we need to do. And as a church we look around at our old, worn building and think about our financial woes and wonder how we can carry on. And when we walk out our doors we have to ask ourselves how well do we know what is going on in the community around us. What do we know about the people who sleep under our wheelchair ramp or those who frequent the tattoo parlours or "The Zoo"? What do we know about the needs of the children in our local schools or daycares? Moving beyond our community into the political arena, whether it be the city (either Winnipeg or Toronto!) or provincial or federal (think Senate scandal), we begin to understand why young people no longer care to vote. It can be a desert experience to be sure – dry, threatening, scary.

But my reading tells me that deserts are holy places – places that help us to remember the sacred. And I am reminded it is Advent. The first image of Advent is John the Baptist coming out of the desert crying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." And we have the quoting of scripture, "make straight in the desert a highway." Something is about to happen and we need to do some work.

Whenever I hear these words in Advent my mind goes to that old musical, "Godspell" (which really says something about my age!). I always loved how that play begins with a haunting lone voice singing those words, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." The voice gains in strength and then comes the crash of drums and guitars and one voice becomes many and the haunting sound gives way to jubilation.

Well, such is the message of Advent – this time of waiting and preparing – and such is my reflection on deserts. There are deep and troubling places in our lives – but out of them comes the power of community and the hope of jubilation. Of course, it isn't magic and it takes some work but deep in the centre of all our woes is the seed of hope. Our job is to nurture that seed. To help it find water and nourishment, to help it grow and witness to the life it holds.

So, I would invite us during the course of this Advent season to enter into our deserts as individuals and as communities – as people of this congregation – and see if we can find that seed and hear that lone voice calling from within – or from our neighbour. Ask ourselves how we can nurture that seed and build on that one voice so that we have a mighty chorus proclaiming hope and joy, peace and love. Where in our community is life already happening? What do we need to tend to in order for that life to flourish? And how can we share that life beyond our walls? This is what it means to "prepare the way".



---

## Tidings from the Treasurer

Bill Gillis

---

The issue of finances is a common concern in many churches these days. Crescent Fort Rouge is not spared. At the moment we have a significant operational deficit. Historically, December has always been a good month financially. It is unclear at this stage how our year will end. While we need to be concerned about our financial future, I found this following story to expand my thinking. I offer it for your reflection.

*One of the perennial questions that Mount Gambier Presbyterian Church (USA) gets each year is why their budget is always in deficit. This is how they respond. "It's because we plan it that way. We do hold some invested funds, and that's because folk either gave it to us as a trust to be used that way, or some of our funds represent the realization of property, which is also a capital trust from generations past. But, in general, I've never believed Jesus is going to return and want to know how much money we have managed to squirrel away in the bank.*

*We have more Gospel work that we can do.  
We are not interested in meeting a budget.  
We are not interested in maintaining a bank balance.*

*We are interested in local, national and international ministry and mission.*

*We plan a deficit budget because we aim to carry out a mission which is beyond our resources.  
God makes the difference.*

*We plan a deficit budget because there is so much to do.*

*If the folk here give beyond what we've budgeted for, we'll increase our spending.*

*Maintenance doesn't cost so much. And death costs even less."*

*The minister then goes on to illustrate with a real life story. A man talks about the birth of his son. The USA does not have the medical care system we have. So within hours after the birth of his son, the father was faced with the hospital bill for the birth.*

*He said: "That check turned out to be only the first of hundreds, maybe thousands, I would write on Lance's behalf. Children are expensive. There was formula and food to buy. Doctor visits and vaccinations assaulted my banking account. Diapers and toys took their toll. And clothes were a constant drain. Just when he would get a good wardrobe, he would grow a smidgen and we would have to start all over.*

*As Lance's age and size increased so did the expenses. Soon it was baseball gloves, Nike shoes and uniforms. Then he needed glasses for his eyes and braces for his teeth. And then, disaster struck. Lance became a teenager! Now it was cars, electronic gadgets, and cool clothes.*

*Then came college. Lance had always, and only, wanted to be an architect. To me it seemed he would be in school until he was forty-two years old. Expenses soared! Tuition, books, and drawing tools led the long list of essential expenditures.*

*But, of course, just like loving fathers everywhere, I was happy to be able to help him and I did all I could to support his growth and his dreams. I never thought of these expenses as "sacrifice." I was his Daddy and was prepared to give everything possible toward his life and dreams.*

*And then, one day, Lance died. On a bright, beautiful, and horrible Halloween Day, twenty-one-year-old Lance was buried in his church's little country cemetery. That afternoon I walked away from his grave and since that day **I have never spent another nickel on Lance.***

***That is how I learned it. Death is cheap. Death can be sustained without expense. It is living that is costly. It is growth that is expensive. Our dreams, visions, and hopes require resources. Death doesn't!*** And that is why I am glad my church needs money. A living, growing, thriving church will always require the continual, consistent, and conscientious financial support of its members. And that's the church I want to belong to."



## Adventuring into Advent, and Beyond: Worship ~ from barb

Advent worship is the time when the church seems most out of step with the culture. This year, shops have had their Christmas displays up even before Halloween, let alone Remembrance Day! And the Christian church sets aside the four Sundays leading up to Christmas as a time of anticipation and preparation. In many churches, Christmas carols are not sung until December 24, and the worship mood is reflective and somber.

For the early church, Christmas was a lesser festival, with Easter taking center stage. And in the early years of my ministry, i was there, too. Until the year i decided to write a Christmas musical. Okay, i didn't write the music (thanks to Connie Kaldor's generosity, we used her stuff), but i did write a script, and the research for that script sent me deep into the opening chapters of Luke's gospel – a treasure trove of stories, rich and awe-inspiring. i discovered that i didn't know "the Christmas story" as well as i thought i did. i encourage you to read the first two chapters of Luke, and the first chapter of Matthew to deepen your experience of Christmas.

The prophet Isaiah will be read during Advent and into the coming year, a prophet who is quoted more in the New Testament than any of the other prophets. Isaiah preached at the time a new empire, Assyria, was on the march. The northern kingdom of Israel had fallen, and little Judea alone remained as the last bulwark of faithfulness in the one God. In a time of rising idolatry, Isaiah preached to instill faith and bring courage in a time of fear. In the new year, our gospel moves to Matthew's telling of the Jesus story. "Matthew" (not one of the 12 disciples, but a later follower) composed his version of the story around 80-90 AD, and was concerned that Jewish tradition not be lost in a church growing ever more Gentile. He frequently reminds us that Jesus is "the Son of David" and nearly every important person in Matthew's stories is Jewish. In Matthew's version, Jesus is the New Messiah who comes not to destroy the Law but to fulfill it.

## A Christmas Carol

by

Charles Dickens

Back by popular demand ~the fifth annual  
dramatic reading



Friday December 6th at 7:30p.m.

Crescent Fort Rouge United Church

Tickets \$10 at the door

With the church looking splendid in its Christmas finery; *a line-up of excellent readers* – David Northcott, Jenny Gerbasi, Jo Millard, barb janes, and Ted Dodd; *a selection of lovely Christmas music* presented by "The Carollers"; *seasonal refreshments* and *audience carolling*, it will be a delightful start to your Christmas season.

Come and enjoy a Christmas tradition.

## Vivaldi's "Gloria"

Sunday December 15<sup>th</sup> 3:00p.m.

Churchill Park United

Vivaldi's "Gloria" will be the highlight of a combined Advent service between Harrow, Churchill Park and Crescent Fort Rouge United Churches. The three church choirs are busy practicing their parts of this joyful piece of music. The "Gloria" has twelve movements featuring choir and soloists.

## **Christmas Flowers for Shut-Ins**

**Sunday December 15**

It has become a tradition at Crescent Fort Rouge to provide Christmas flowers, usually poinsettias, to those folks that are shut-in and unable to be part of our church Advent/Christmas celebrations. This year, our Pastoral Care team will again coordinate this and asks for your help in delivering flowers to our shut-ins. This is an opportunity for you to meet a shut-in(s) and let



her/him know that we are thinking of them. The flowers will be here at the church and ready for pickup and delivery on **Sunday,**

**December 15<sup>th</sup>.** If you are able to help by delivering a flower or two, please come to the Fellowship Hall following the service on the 15<sup>th</sup>. If you have any questions about this, please contact Gail Glover.

## **White Gift Sunday**

**December 15**

At Crescent Fort Rouge we follow the tradition of many churches in celebrating White Gift Sunday. This special day in Advent began many years ago as a way of valuing the donations of all people in a congregation directed to a specially chosen ministry. In years gone by all the gifts and donations were wrapped in white paper so that no one would be able to see the value of individual gifts. All were valued equally.

Today, when people are more environmentally conscious, we ask that donations not be wrapped. Instead we invite folk to place their donations in a used or reusable bag. Again we value the donations of all people.

This year, White Gift Sunday will be celebrated on December 15. All are invited to come to this service with white gifts that will be offered during the worship time.

## **Longest Night Service**

**Saturday December 21 at 4:00p.m.**

As we head into the season of celebration and joy we recognize that at times we need to pause and reflect on some of the difficulties of life. There are many things in life that cause us to rejoice – but there are also situations that bring sorrow and pain. In those difficult times we find it hard to be a part of the rejoicing of the Christmas season. Perhaps we have looked around at the suffering in our world – people whose lives are torn apart by massive weather events, people who have dealt with catastrophes, or perhaps we feel the loneliness that comes with a sense that something is missing in life. It may be that we have experienced the grief of losing a loved one, or have received the news about a serious illness or a break-up of a relationship, or maybe a child is experiencing depression or some other troubling situation.

When these things become a part of our lives we often need a time of being with others who have similar feelings. We need a time of hearing the Christmas message in a way that enables us to know that this is really a season of comfort and peace. On Saturday, December 21 at 4:00p.m. we will have a Longest Night Service at the church. This will be a quiet, reflective time of hearing the Christmas story and singing carols. It will be a time to reflect and honour the pain in our lives and know that we are not alone and that the Holy is with us.

*All are welcome to join in this service.*

## **Christmas Eve Service**

**Carol singing at 7:15p.m.**

**Worship at 7:30p.m.**

Children and Children-at-Heart who wish to be in the pageant, please come “back stage” to the Fellowship Hall for costumes and instructions at 7:00p.m. on December 24<sup>th</sup>.

---

## Winnipeg Presbytery News

Elsie Douglas

---

At the November meeting of Winnipeg Presbytery, we voted on six **remits**.

“What are remits?” you might ask. Well, a remit is a vote by presbyteries, or by presbyteries and congregations to change the Basis of Union.

Your next question might be, “And so – what is this Basis of Union?” The Basis of Union is the agreement made when the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church and the Congregational Churches of Canada united in 1925 to form the United Church of Canada. It contains a statement of faith and an outline of the structure and basic policies of the United Church.

Back to remits – Some remits deal with editorial or language changes (e.g. gender language, updating terms, etc.); some reflect changes in procedures or general practice; and some affect the identity of the denomination (significant changes to doctrine or church courts, understanding of ministry or membership, etc.)

The last category of remits requires the approval of a majority of all presbyteries and all pastoral charges (congregations) in the United Church of Canada. Crescent Fort Rouge and Winnipeg Presbytery participated in this kind of remit process in 2012. We were asked to consider three “newer” expressions of our faith: “A New Creed”, “A Song of Faith”, and the “1940 Statement of Faith”. “A Song of Faith” was written in 2006. Debra Schweyer from Crescent Fort Rouge was on the committee that created this beautiful and lyrical statement of faith.\* “A New Creed”, which our congregation says almost every Sunday, was written in 1968 and altered a couple of times since then. Ecumenically it is known as the “United Church Creed” and has been adopted by other denominations. The “1940 Statement of Faith” was used widely into the 1970s. (You can tell that changes to our doctrine don’t happen often.) On March 13, 2012, after engaging in a study of these living statements of our faith, Winnipeg Presbytery voted in favour of including them in the Basis of Union and on May 9, 2012, our Leadership Team did the same.



The remits at the November 2013 meeting did not deal with significant changes to United Church doctrine or policy and did not require active participation at the congregational level. They were concerned more with changes in wording and procedures. One remit that may be of interest to Crescent Fort Rouge as we prepare to consider a new constitution would allow the Leadership Team to fill any vacancies in its membership until a congregational meeting could be held for that purpose (usually the Annual Meeting). It may come as a surprise that there is currently no provision for a vacancy to be filled outside of a meeting of those in full United Church membership. This is likely a case of policy catching up with practice. The remits will be posted on the bulletin board.

(\* If you want to read “A Song of Faith”, look for it on the United Church website at [www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca) or ask Elsie to give you a copy.)

---

### UCW News

*Brenda Baker, President*

---

- Thanks to everyone who baked and cooked and who came to help and buy at the **Fall Market**. I am looking forward to feedback from everyone who attended.
- We have exciting news for the new year. There will be another **Women’s Connect** in March, 2014. Registration and dates will follow.
- We will be holding our **Rally** at Pinawa on June 6, 7 & 8, 2014. More news will follow in the bulletin. Be sure to keep your eyes open for workshop registration. Come and join us and make new friends.

The United Church has many outreach (non-congregational) ministries from coast to coast to coast, largely supported by our Mission and Service Fund. Our congregation supports three such ministries:

**Project Peacemakers** is supported by our annual donation of space for their fundraising concert, held at CFR in November, and by several spare change offerings each year. An education and advocacy group, Project Peacemakers partners annually with the Manitoba Japanese-Canadian Citizens Association for the *Lanterns for Peace* event, held on the anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

**Oak Table Community Ministry (OTCM)** operates a *drop-in* housed in Augustine United Church (River & Pulford). Monday to Thursday afternoons. The drop-in currently serves 80-100 guests each day, offering food, coffee, conversation and support – and even (via volunteers) haircuts, shoe repair, mending and tutoring. OTCM is also the site of a monthly *clinic*, run by the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, as well as a learning site for nursing students' mental health practicum.

**St. Matthew's-Maryland Community Ministry (SMMCM)** (St. Matthew's & Maryland) also operates a *drop-in*, and several other initiatives. *First Steps to Employment* is ready to offer the fifth intake of those wanting to sharpen job-finding and job-keeping skills. At this time of year, an *Advent Soup and Movie night* is offered, with the food provided by local churches – a time for families to come together to enjoy a warm meal, and fun film. The annual *Free Christmas Toy Store* will be open for adults to choose a free item for their child, all donated by churches like ours. Such items include toys, games, puzzles, PJs, and even movie passes (please, no violent games/toys/etc). CFR's *White Gift Sunday* will be December 15, so please bring your unwrapped gift then (gift wrap, gift bags, and tape are also

welcome items). Further, this community ministry also provides *emergency food kits* to tide people over when there is too much month and not enough money. Your generous support of this ongoing project is deeply appreciated.

Mitts, hats and socks are especially needed as the days grow cold, and our *Mitten Tree* will happily receive these items. This year, we are emphasizing the needs of adults for these things (dark or neutral colors are especially appreciated) – these items will go to the guests at OTCM and SMMCM. Any children's items will be donated to the Fort Rouge Day Care in our own building.

For more details on particular needs of these ministries, check out the bulletin board opposite the main office, or speak to Barbara Ann Bryant Anstie. The Outreach Ministry Group offers a big Christmas thank you for the many ways you support these ministries, and encourage you to continue as you are able. There are always items in high demand and short supply!

- The focus of the Outreach Ministry Group is to offer tangible items and volunteer time to these particular ministries. We are aware there is another aspect of this work that needs a Ministry Group – Advocacy. Such a group might consider lobbying the government for a raise in social assistance rates or for more affordable housing...or might just ask us all uncomfortable questions about why poverty continues to exist in Canada and what structures keep people poor. We see these focuses as complementary – and both are necessary.

Again, gratitude for your support!



---

## House Groups

*Jo Millard, Co-ordinator*

---

**House Groups** continue their function of offering hospitality to Sunday worshippers in greeting, ushering, serving refreshments (and clean-up) as well as other duties like lighting candles, taking up offering, reading scripture, and more.

Upcoming House Groups :

**December** - *Herb Neufeld*, leader  
Heather Daymond & Gracie; Shirley Duckworth; Heather Gillis; Helen Isaak; Juanita & Don Lowe; Phyllis Moss; Ken & Jane Natrass; Stacey Natrass-Brown, Damian, Max & Jackson Brown; Jim Penner & Ina Baas-Penner; Dorian Phillips; Debra Schweyer; Grace Wu

**January** - *Ken Anstie*, leader  
Barbara Anne Bryant Anstie; Fern Bailes; Anna Marie & MacKinnon Boquist; Kelly Goldstrand; Gary Hannaford & Cathy Rushton; Shirley Hilton; June Malabar; Heather Menzies; Verna Nichols; Audrey Peniuk; Leona Penner; Iris Reimer; Nancy Schritt; Marva & Alia Smith

**February** - *Elizabeth Schirmer*, leader  
Ken & Marlene Beaty; Bea & Doug Burgess; Reg Carther; Kathy & Ivy Desbiolles; Murray Gibbings; Helen Goldstrand; Thomas Linner, Renee Cable, Connor & Madeleine; Stuart & Casey Mann; Barb Masterman; Elizabeth & Scott Nachtigall, Marcus & Emma; Teresa Reynolds; Carla & Roisin Richmond; Sharon & Terry Silcox; Terry & Amber Wark; Jan Harper & Peter Mitchell

If you are not part of a House Group and would like to be, please see Jo {204-477-1039 or jamill@mts.net}.

---

## Passages

---

### Baptisms

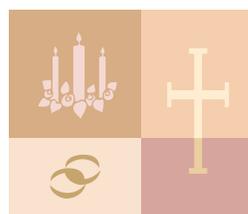
- August 25 ● Aryanna Dooma {Daughter of Megan Horton & Trent Lesage}
- October 6 ● Connor Burnett {Son of Renee Cable & Rory Burnett}
- Madeleine Linner {Daughter of Renee Cable & Thomas Linner}
- Daevi Angus {Daughter of Deena Persaud & Daniel Angus}

### New Members

- Dave Waters
- Brett Scott & Sajani Joykuttu
- Carolyn Rickey, Don Lowe, Renee Cable
- Wenona Babbitt & Robert Gaumont

### In Memoriam

- September 23 ● Evert Botterweg



To enquire about Baptism or Membership please speak with Irene or barb or call the church office.

## REDEVELOPMENT FEASIBILITY TASK GROUP

*This is a summary of a presentation given to the congregation following the November 10<sup>th</sup> worship service.*

This Task Group was created in the summer of 2013 to determine the feasibility of redeveloping the Crescent Fort Rouge United Church building to better serve the needs of the congregation and its surrounding community into the future.

Crescent Fort Rouge United Church (CFR), like many mainline churches in a changing social environment, is facing stresses associated with operating out of a loved, but increasingly ill-suited 100-plus year old building. The review is exploring whether our building might be re-purposed, renovated or some of it be demolished to build something that might better serve our congregation and community.

### ***There were some planning assumptions at the outset:***

- The sanctuary at CFR is wanted and needed for the future of the congregation
- The back section of the building and possibly yard space offer potential for redevelopment
- The continuation of Fort Rouge Child Care within CFR would be a necessary part of any redevelopment plan

### ***Some things we need to consider in this study:***

- Our church building has many challenges
  - ~it is old and in need of costly major repairs
  - ~the costs of maintaining the building are very high
  - ~winter heating costs are high
  - ~central air conditioning is non-existent
- The current congregation is unable to maintain the finances required to support our various ministries and to repair and properly maintain our building

- Accessibility to all areas of our building is compromised

- The Fort Rouge Child Care would be better served in a non-basement setting

### ***Some of the Task Group's activities since the summer have included the following:***

- Met with Hon. Jennifer Howard, MLA for Fort Rouge and Minister of Family Services and Labour.
- Met with Dr. Richard Milgrom, Head and Associate Professor, Department of City Planning, University of Manitoba.
- Met with Jenny Gerbasi, City Councillor for Fort Rouge.
- Corresponded with Nalini Reddy, Chair, Fort Rouge Child Care Board of Directors.
- Met with Rick Frost, Executive Director and Jennifer Partridge, Community Grants Coordinator of The Winnipeg Foundation.
- Met with Rev. Cathy Campbell, WestEnd Commons.
- Met with Michael Robinson, Senior Planner, Planning, Property and Development Department, City of Winnipeg
- Reviewed the *Osborne Village Neighbourhood Plan* (2006):

A second phase of the Task Group's work (not yet started) will involve an "environmental scan". That is, a review of what's going on elsewhere by way of redevelopment of church buildings. Several United Churches across Canada as well as churches in other faith communities are proceeding with or have completed redevelopment projects with their buildings. It will be of interest to contact representatives of many of those churches and determine what they are prepared to share with regard to "lessons learned".

- How did they overcome barriers placed in their way?
- Where did they obtain the necessary funding?

***There are a couple of things that are important to remember:***

- This is just an exercise in information gathering.
- No decisions have been made to alter our building and no financial resources have been spent or committed by the Task Group or Leadership Team on redevelopment.

***What are the next steps for the Task Group?***

- Seek direction from the Leadership Team as to whether the Feasibility Study should continue in light of new information available concerning the current state of our building and the church's financial position.
- If our direction is to continue, confirm final membership of the Task Group.
- Follow up with churches identified earlier which have completed or are pursuing redevelopment projects similar to that contemplated by CFR to learn from their experiences.
- Follow up with agencies identified by the Hon. Jennifer Howard as potential community partners.
- Attend the Corydon Osborne Neighbourhood Plan Public Forum to be held at Gladstone School on November 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Follow up with The Winnipeg Foundation regarding potential grant opportunities.
- Provide regular progress updates to the Fort Rouge Child Care Executive Director and Board Chair.
- Provide regular progress updates to the CFR Leadership Team and to the Congregation.

Ken Natrass

***Welcome to all the Newcomers!***

The Pastoral Care team would like to welcome all those people who have recently (in the last year or two) started attending Crescent Fort Rouge United Church. On Sunday, October 20, following worship, we hosted a Newcomers Luncheon. Newcomers were treated to lunch and had an opportunity to hear short presentations about the operational structure of the church, the leadership team, ministry groups, house groups, and the various options for financial contributions to the church. We also had an opportunity to find out a little more about our new folks. It was a positive time of sharing.

Welcome and we hope that you find a spiritual home in Crescent Fort Rouge United Church!

***Getting away without jetting away***

Everyone loves a winter vacation, and tropical sunshine can be pretty appealing during the dark and cold of a Manitoba winter. But air travel is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions, with a greater climate impact per passenger kilometre than cars, trains or boats.

Consider taking a **staycation** this year. You can still treat yourself and your family to an adventurous excursion or a relaxing getaway without hopping on a plane. There are lots of sporting and cultural events within driving distance, not to mention fine dining, shopping and spa treatments, and plenty of local hotels, lodges and B&Bs would be happy to host you. To make sure you feel "on vacation", turn off your cellphone and don't check your email. You can still mail postcards to friends!

You might discover hidden treasures in your own backyard, and you could make new friends too. Find joy in your local surroundings, support the economy in your own neighbourhood and community, and breathe a bit easier knowing your exciting staycation is helping to keep our air clean.

*Green Tip from Debbie Girard*

**CFRUC's 2014 Calendar**  
**A fundraising keepsake for only \$15**  
*Now available for purchase*

*Who are we at Crescent Fort Rouge United Church?*

Over 100 photos begin to answer that question in black & white and full colour. Some of the many people, places, programs, events and activities spanning 130 years of our church life are represented in these pages. The monthly photo collages give us a glimpse into who we were, who we are, and what we do to make a difference in God's world.

In addition to showcasing our congregational life, each of the 12 calendar months contains dates of scheduled CFR liturgical, social and arts events, providing a guide to an entire year of meaningful involvement. The calendar is enriched with printed quotations and prayers provided by Rev. Barb Janes.

To order your calendars today, phone our Office Administrator Sherri at (204) 475-6011 or send an email to [cfruc@mts.net](mailto:cfruc@mts.net).





**FAIR TRADE COFFEE, TEA & CHOCOLATE make great Christmas gifts too!** There is always a supply of tea and chocolate available for purchase in the church office. Just speak to **Shirley Nicol** or **Donna Fillingham**.

***Still looking for Christmas gift ideas?***

How about something that arrives not once but 11 times a year? The **United Church OBSERVER** brings fresh insights, provocative ideas, glimpses into the lives of the ordinary and the outstanding and provides stories of leading edge ministry in United churches, large and small, across the country and with our partners overseas. Fifty people from CFR are already subscribers.

Everybody welcomes a good deal and the **OBSERVER** is offering one now. The yearly subscription is \$20 per year.



But... if we could increase our total subscription by half (i.e. 25 more people) then all 75 subscribers would pay only \$10 per year. Now that's a bargain for this award-winning publication, the oldest continuously published magazine in North America! Why not consider this 'gift' to yourself as well as to others? Again... just 25 more people and it's half-price for everyone. To order a new subscription, speak with Sherri in the office (204 475 6011) or Diane Gillis (204 475 3463). (Current subscribers are reminded that 2014 renewals will be due in January.)

**GIFTS WITH VISION**

Searching for new and meaningful gift ideas this year? You will find something for everyone on your list in **Gifts with Vision**, the United Church's giving catalogue. Gifts with Vision is a great way to introduce children to the idea of "giving to the world." A giving idea: Select a family gift to give to the world in honour of someone you love. Check out the United Church website to learn more about some of the Mission and Service

partners whose projects are featured in Gifts with Vision. *Catalogues (hard copies) are available at the back of the Sanctuary.*



**U2 service on New Year's Eve!** Keep your ears open ..... barb and Jenny are planning a service on **December 31<sup>st</sup>** featuring the music of U2. This will be an early service (**7:00p.m.**). This type of service (U2charist) is a liturgical service (including communion) that features the music of the rock band U2 and a message about God's call to rally around the **Millennium Development Goals** (Eight international goals to improve the world). The U2charist is held by supporters to be a great opportunity to reach out to people in their congregations and larger communities, especially young people, with messages of global reconciliation and justice for the poor and oppressed. Come out to CFR for an hour of great music and spirituality before you head out to your festivities and parties!

**NEW  
YEAR'S  
EVE**

The **Alleluia Singers**, CFR's gospel choir, are planning a concert on **Sunday, January 26th at 2:00p.m.** We will sing some lovely Gaither pieces, as well as some of the old gospel songs that everyone knows and loves! Be ready to sing along. Our music will warm your heart – and refresh your spirit!

Please plan to come – and bring your friends and family!



**New Year's Day  
Potluck Luncheon & Games  
~1:00p.m.~**

**Winter Compost Update:**

You no longer need to cover your compost with leaves for the winter.

