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The November News Update is a publication produced by the Ministry Leadership Team to keep you up to date on what's happening at First United. It is distributed monthly by e-mail. If you would like to receive a regular News Update, please send an e-mail to nina.matthews@firstunited.ca.

November News Update

November 2008

Thank You Dinner

On October 16th, 65 friends of First United Church enjoyed a wonderful buffet dinner in the gym. The dinner was catered by Austin Gourmet, from Port Coquitlam and donated by a family that has supported First United for a long time. We enjoyed the premiere of a new video of moments in the life of First United, prepared by Kirsty Matthews. The minister of the Mission, Ric Matthews then concluded the evening with an inspiring and challenging talk on the new vision that is moving First United to becoming a truly inclusive community. Georgina Brunette writes "Thank you for a splendid dinner. From the moment I arrived I was treated with a warm courtesy that speaks clearly that you have indeed made the building into a home. Several of you with whom I chatted will remain clear in my memory. The personal gift of charming earrings has convinced me, finally at 95, to get my ears pierced! May your dreams for First Church come true and sooner than you perhaps hoped."

Welcome to April Pringle

We are pleased to welcome April Pringle, who joined us Monday, October 6th as our new Manager of Food Services. April, who lives in Steveston, has worked in the food industry for the past thirty years and has a Diploma in Nutrition and Food Service Man-

agement as well as her Red Seal Chef's Papers. April has taken over many of the functions capably performed by Linda Ostrom who has now been freed to spend more time doing Community Outreach work in the Mission and with First United Church Housing Society.



Brian and Sandra at the October 16th dinner

Sarah leaving and Karli returning

After a three month leave of absence, we are pleased to welcome Karli Bereska back to First as a member of our Programme staff. Our thanks to our summer student, Sarah Oman, who continued working past the conclusion of her summer contract.

Expanding Food Services

In our efforts to provide nutritious food to the community, we will be expanding our meal program to provide lunches five days a week to the community. Contact Marion Young, our Volunteer Coordinator, for opportunities to support this activity.

Welcome Samaya

Samaya Oakley, first year student at VST, joins the team at First United for an eight month long field education placement. Samaya, a member of the Unitarian/Universalist Church, will be present in the Mission one day a week and will be exploring what it means to be in ministry in the context of the Downtown Eastside.

Orientation Opportunity

Join our monthly two-hour orientation to the Mission and to issues of the Downtown Eastside. The next one is Tuesday, November 25th, 9-11 a.m. Please call Marion Young, our volunteer coordinator, if you are interested. The group size is limited to eight.

Ric & Nina Matthews recently moved into the neighbourhood. Ric says "It's exciting to be physically part of a new kind of community that includes Strathcona, China Town & the Downtown Eastside".

A Gift that will make a Difference

Tired of buying Christmas gifts for those who don't need more? Then consider a donation to First United Church in lieu of Christmas gifts. On receiving your online donation, you will be provided with a special Christmas card to send to your honouree which recognizes your donation on their behalf.

Visit the website and click on CanadaHelps and click on Christmas Gifts. For more information, Contact Nina 604-681-8365 X 117



First is Opening Earlier !

Staff have arranged personal schedules so that we can be open an hour and a half earlier to enable members of the community to gain access to the building. First United will be open from 7am to 4pm on weekdays from Nov 17th

Join us for Lunch on Christmas Day

Christmas Dinner will again be hosted by a group of friends who provide the food and prepare and present a delicious spread in the brightly decorated gym. Last year 200 people joined in a joyous Christmas celebration. You are invited! Come alone or come with family and friends.

End of Year Donations

We continue to be extremely grateful for the generous financial support we receive. Without this, we would not be able to do the work we do. As we prepare to close off our books for 2008, we would like to let you know how donations received late in the year will be handled. While we

would like to be as flexible as possible, we will be adhering to the following procedures in order to keep our accounting in order. For donations to be accepted in the year 2008, cheques must be dated in 2008 and the postmark or receipt date at our office (for delivered, couriered or sent by some other

Hope in Shadows

Consider giving a gift that lasts all year. Enable friends to be confronted by the compelling images of the "Hope in Shadows" calendar each month. Order them from nina.matthews@firstunited.ca @ \$20 each.

Clothing—still a huge need

A reminder to check our website for a list of the items we are currently receiving. The parking garage has been secured and those who are dropping off donations are asked to park their cars in the entrance to the parking garage and come to the office. We will be happy to provide a strong person to help unload your car.

We always need socks, touques, gloves, warm jackets, rain gear, new underwear, t-shirts, blankets, towels.....

means) must be in 2008. Regardless of the above, any donation received after January 9, 2009 (a Friday) will be considered a 2009 donation. Queries can be directed to Tony Weall at (604)681-8365 Ext.105.

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