



THE ROCK GARDEN

An Alberni Valley United Church Newsletter—May, 2011



An Appreciative Spark

Rev. Minnie Hornidge

“It only takes a SPARK to get a fire going and then all those around can warm up to its glowing.” That’s how it is at AVUC; there are many sparks a glowing. Countless appreciative sparks are being fanned into flame. An appreciative spark is generated by putting into action the answers to questions like these: What is it you love to do? What are your passions? What do you cherish? What gives you life? What is the “thing” that you just cannot not do? Living the answers to these questions are life-giving sparks. One spark of enthusiasm lights up another person’s enthusiasm. One spark of encouragement lights another’s soul. One spark becomes... Then there is a community of faith aglow like fireworks that light up the night sky with stunning beauty. AVUC is learning how to be a community of life-givingness by focusing on Jesus purpose statement:” **I have come that you shall have life and have it abundantly.**” (John 10:10) and by living the Appreciative Way.

The Appreciative Way is a paradigm shift. A paradigm shift is like putting on a new set of glasses and looking through new lenses. The Appreciative Way chooses to learn about what life is giving and to believe that people, churches, and all of creation are mysteries to be embraced. One pithy saying ascribed to the Appreciative Way is *where you look for what is working well you will find that most things are*. Church and society have been operating within an Empirical Paradigm (also called the Problem Solving Paradigm). This paradigm has accomplished much and the Appreciative Way Paradigm grows from it. This is a new paradigm that leads with collaboration, compassion, creativity, future oriented focus and has the undergirding philosophy that every

person has a purpose; there is a divine spark within each and every person. Fan into flame that divine spark within yourself and others, by focusing on “whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think on these things,”(Philippians 4:8) and speak only words that are a life giving spark.

Appreciative Paradigm

1. Search for solutions that already exist
2. Amplify what is working
3. Focus on life giving forces
4. What is working well around here?
5. Learning from *what works*

Who is to affirm?

Basic Assumption: People and organizations are mysteries to be embraced.

Empirical (problem solving) Paradigm

1. *Define the problem*
 2. *Fix what's broken*
 3. *Focus on decay*
 4. *What problems are you having?*
1. *Learning from our mistakes*
Who is to blame?

Basic Assumption: *People and organizations are problems to be solved.*

A Message from the Treasurer

Believe it or not, summer weather is coming!!!

With warmer weather, people begin to travel and enjoy the outdoors. Thus attendance at church on Sundays drops until September. However, the work of the church continues throughout the summer months.

It is important to keep your level of giving up during these summer months even if you are absent from the church on Sundays. Keeping this in mind here are some helpful hints:

- If you know you are going to be absent for awhile, write a post dated cheque before you go away and place in your envelope.
- Become a member of the ever-growing and popular PAR (Pre Authorized Remittance) Team. Call Carol Korven for details at 250-723-5265 and sign up. You'll be glad you did as it relieves you of ever having to remember or forgetting your offering again

I continue to encourage everyone to contribute to the church on a regular basis. This definitely helps me being able to pay bills promptly. Thanks to all who help and organize fundraisers. A special thanks to Carol Korven for her dedication in depositing Sunday offerings and keeping track of your givings.

Mission & Service Report

-Garage sale Saturday, May 14

Please place donations on stage

Proceeds to AVUC upkeep

-Sunday, June 5, Lasagna luncheon to be held
after church

(For Guyana church/school and Palestinian refugees)

Suggested donation \$5.00

Remember our Blue Basket in the Narthex—Food items are greatly appreciated by Bread of Life

-Collected \$344.00 for Japanese Appeal

-Des and Dawne helped Sunday school children bake cookies and donated to Bread of Life

-Des made hamburger soup for Bread of Life

-Made \$247.00 at Spring dinner from raffle sales for church

Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries

Blessings, Sandra Simpson

AVUC Events

May 4 ~ High Tea: tickets are \$10, available at the church office.

May 8 ~ AVUC Children's Choir present "**It's Cool in the Furnace**" during Sunday Service.

May 9 ~ Pro-D-Day: It's AVUC's turn to host the Pro-D Day event. Helpers are always needed and appreciated. Please contact Rev. Minnie to volunteer.

May 14 ~ AVUC Garage Sale

May 27 ~ Dinner and Whist. Talk to Ann Gray for more details.

June 5 ~ Lasagna Luncheon, after Worship-sponsored by Mission & Service

June 19 ~ Church Picnic & Grad Recognition

Study Group:

FEED: Observer Study Group @7pm in the Lounge on:

May 3: *How do we know Jesus Wasn't a Myth. (February, 2011)*

May 10: *What Is Heaven (July/August, 2010)*

May 24: *Do I Need To Be Certain About My Faith (December, 2010)*

May 31: *What's the Real Power of Prayer (March, 2011)*

June 7: *To the Brink and Back (November, 2010)*

Health and Fitness:

Aerobics is still going, every Monday and Wednesday from 7 to 8 pm in the church hall. There is also a step aerobics class every Thursday from 6:30 to 7:30 pm

United Church of Canada Identity Survey

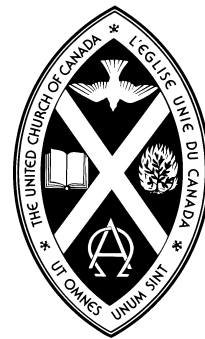
Planning our future together!

This initiative will help the whole church—and OUR congregation—look to the future with hope and joy. This survey is open to everyone who worships here and is part of our faith community.

Please visit the website and answer the questionnaire—make your views known!

Website open May 1—June 5, 2011. Success depends on your participation!

Online participation is encouraged, but hard copies are available from the church office.



Morning Prayer

*Let me hear what you will speak when I turn to you in
my heart. Psalm 85:8*

*Like and infant's open-eyed wonder
and the insights of a wise grandmother,
like a young man's vision for justice
and the vitality that shines in a girl's face,
like tears that flow in a friend bereaved
and laughter in a lover's eyes,
you have given me ways of seeing, O God,
you have endowed me with sight like your
own.*

*Let these be alive in me this day,
let these be alive in me. Amen. (John Philip
Newell) A beautiful ending to this prayer
might be to reflect on such questions as
these. What is the purpose of my life today?
How today may I be a spark of the divine
lighting up someone's life today?*



SOCIAL JUSTICE

Yes! It is Banner Time. Kairos, 11 churches working together for justice and peace, has designed a Cross Canada Action Project called "The Banner Train" & "Roll With the Declaration." This project celebrates the Canadian government's endorsement of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. AVUC is invited to be part of this justice making collaborative action. On June 20 in Ottawa, "we'll be creating an enormous banner marking the support of churches and communities across Canada for the UN Declaration, and we'll use it in a public action on Parliament Hill." Rev. Minnie says, "Yes! Let's join the banner train." For more information talk to Jean Bishop and Rev. Minnie.