

# BLOORBEAT

The Newsletter of



Volume XXX, Issue 2

## Minister's Message

The weeks following Christmas and its closing festival of Epiphany, in January and February, are full of stories of Jesus' ministry of healing, teaching, and sharing teachings about God and God's kingdom. He undertakes a mission and ministry that is all about the good news of God's love, both describing and, perhaps more importantly, demonstrating how God's purpose is to clean up or recreate the world and make it, as intended at the beginning, a place of right relationships, of justice, peace, equality. The power of these stories is their inspirational nature as the Spirit's down payment, as it were, on a new global household, as they draw us in to a vision of the world as God would have it be. Such is God's mission in and through Jesus.

The church took Jesus' message about God's mission and over the centuries turned it into a proclamation about Jesus, making the Inclusive One the paradoxical dividing line between all peoples – if you're with Jesus you're in; if you're not a Christian, you're out. This tragic and sometimes terrorizing turn, in which the messenger became the message and the proclaimer became the proclaimed, has given God's mission a bad name, since the word "mission" is now so associated with what the church did to tribal and aboriginal peoples, to so-called "heathen" and to people of other faiths, culminating in the most disastrous campaign of all, the Final Solution of Hitler and his self-identified "Christian" henchmen. Mission has such a presumed evangelical faith content that liberal preachers like myself find it difficult at best and near-impossible at worst to infuse it with any vestige of its original intent – but, stubborn as I am, I try and try again!

Maybe this helps: All kinds of organizations have Mission Statements, as does Bloordale United Church, and generally these statements seek to succinctly describe what purpose the organization has. We toss ideas around for a while and then seek to build consensus about a cluster of those ideas. Many churches have done precisely this in seeking to decide what their purpose is, thus failing to differentiate themselves from other organizations in either process or content. But the church, friends, is different from other organizations, even charitable or service ones, in at least one glaring way: we seek to discern God's will for us, and not just pool our own ideas together. We seek to discern, not so much our mission as the church but God's mission for the church, and this involves a process of prayer, discernment, scripture reflection, and theological depth – and while the end product, of not just a Mission Statement but a people united in living God's mission, is harder to achieve, it has the value of being blessed by the Spirit and holds the promise of the church's multifold renewal.

Here's more of what I mean. A group of scholars who are active in the church beyond the academy – in other words, not just in an intellectual ivory tower! – got together for an unprecedented length of time, about six weeks, near the end of the first year of this millennium, 2000, to talk about God's mission in a global context.<sup>1</sup> Their theme was simply stated: Mission is Action in Hope, and their conviction was that this was the core message of the gospel: that Mission is God's mission, first and foremost, before it's ours (the church's); that the Action is God's action in mending or cleaning up creation before it's ours; and that the Hope is God's hope for a new creation, also before it's ours.

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## Bloordale United Church

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Minister	Rev. Brian W. McIntosh
Honorary Pastoral Associate	Rev. Robert G. Trimble
Pastoral Care Minister	Rev. Nelsona Dundas
Christian Development Co-ordinator	Lisa Mazzariol
Youth Leader	Sarah McIntosh
Administrative Assistant	Juanita Eldridge
Organist & Choir Director	Mervin Fick
Custodian	Jim Spalding

### Church Council

Chair	Julia Stavreff
Church Council Secretary	Pat Nelson
Congregational Meeting Secretary	Pat Nelson
Board of Trustees	Jack Lovatt
Ministry and Personnel	Frank Sword
Nominations	Pat Nelson
Treasurer	Bob Hitchcock
Presbytery Representative	Norman Dundas
Minister	Rev. Brian W. McIntosh

### Committee Chairs

Communications	John Pauksens
Congregational Life (co-chairs)	Shirley Scott
Finance & Stewardship	Ameena Ramsahai
Outreach (co-chairs)	Jack Lovatt
Pastoral Care	Jill Donaghy
Planned Gift Fund	Shirley Scott
Property	Sylvia Williams
Social and Fund Raising	Bob Hitchcock
United Church Women	Bruce Jackson
Worship	Vanessa Ramsahai
Member-at-Large	Jo-Em Bettridge
	Sharron Le Blanc
	Joan Hollowell

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## LOOKING AT THE WEEKS AHEAD

- **Sunday, February 13** - 6th Sunday after Epiphany
- **Friday, February 18** - Movie Night
- **Sunday, February 20** - 7th Sunday after Epiphany  
Annual Congregational Meeting after Worship
- **Sunday, February 27** - 8th Sunday after Epiphany
- **Saturday, March 5** - 53rd Anniversary Wine & Cheese/ Speaker Event  
Silent Auction
- **Sunday, March 6** - Transfiguration Sunday
- **Tuesday, March 8** - Pancake Supper
- **Wednesday, March 9** - Ash Wednesday  
Tri-Church Service at St. James United Church—7:30 p.m.

### Advance Clocks One Hour on Saturday Evening - Daylight Saving Time Begins

- **Sunday, March 13** - Lent 1—Holy Communion
- **Sunday, March 20** - Lent 2
- **Saturday, March 26** - The Met at Cineplex Odeon—Queensway Cineplex - 1:00 p.m.
- **Sunday, March 27** - Lent 3

**WORSHIP SERVICES ARE AT 10:30 A.M.**

## BLOORDALE AT FOUR SEASONS CENTRE

On Thursday January 20<sup>th</sup>, 7 of us went to the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts for a free chamber music concert; one of the Canadian Opera Company's free Concert Series.

The performers were Jean Desmarais on piano, Pam Hinman on violin, and Garrett Knecht on cello. All three are members of the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra.

Desmarais and Hinman played Beethoven's sonata for Violin and Piano in G Major. Desmarais and Knecht played variations of 'Ein Madchen oder Weibchen' (Mozart's The Magic Flute). This was followed by all three performing Dmitri Shostakovich's Piano Trio No. 2 in E Minor. All three pieces were well done, but the Piano Trio was fascinating to hear and see.

These free concerts are from 12 to 1 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday afternoons (with occasional evenings at 5:30 p.m.) In addition to the Chamber Music Series, there are vocal, piano, jazz, world music and dance series. All are performed in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, on the third floor of the opera house, right next to huge glass windows.

Our Bloordale group had a community group booking and therefore had seats reserved, in the fifth row. Normally, seating is on a first come, first served basis; maximum 200 people.

After the concert, we all went across the street for lunch at Mediterra Seafood Restaurant. We had a lovely meal, and wonderful chit chat; some of our group were heard discussing Quantum Physics!

***Thanks to all for coming. A wonderful time was had by all!***

## UCW NEWS

For the months of February, March and April, the two UCW units will be meeting together on the last Tuesday of each Month from 12 noon to 2:00pm in room 15.

Please call Jackie Trimble 416-239-9419 if you would like to join us or just come along with a sandwich - we'll provide the soup. Cheers.

## In Memoriam

**Barbara Eleanor Gray**

December 14, 1928 - January 16, 2011

## UPCOMING CONCERT

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**Saturday May 14<sup>th</sup>, evening**

**Naparima Alumni Association of Canada**

*A return of the Steelband group so popular two years ago*

***Not to be missed***

## SILENT AUCTION RETURNING TO BLOORDALE

In conjunction with our Wine & Cheese/Guest Speaker event on **March 5<sup>th</sup>**, we will be holding a repeat Silent Auction. Please think about what you would like to contribute. Some suggestions include:

- Theatre tickets
- Sports tickets
- Original artwork
- Baking
- Baby sitting
- Cottage rentals
- Bed and breakfast
- Gift certificates

Proceeds from the Silent Auction will towards Bloordale programmes.

For further information, please talk to Vanessa Ramsahai or any other member of the Social and Fundraising Committee.

## EATONVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL

We were invited last year by Eatonville Public School to share our expertise with interested young people during recess one day a week. Jim Bell has assisted with reading last year, and in January a new initiative was started.

Joan Hollowell is teaching 10/12 youngsters the art of knitting and Juanita Eldridge is working with 10/12 youngsters with canvas needle work. If you are interested in helping, please talk with Lisa Mazzariol.

## CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Church membership is one way of committing oneself to a Christian life. If you have been attending our church and would like to become a member, you are invited to contact the church office or Brian at 416-621-1710. New members are welcomed at a Sunday service on an occasional basis.

You are cordially invited to attend our  
**53<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Celebration**  
**A Wine and Cheese Party**

Join us for a glass of wine (or juice)  
 with fine cheese and crackers!



**Saturday , March 5, 2011**

*Come anytime between 4:30  
 and 7:30 pm*

*Keep this date reserved, more  
 information to follow. Guest speaker TBA.*

*Admission: \$10*

**Come before or after dinner!  
 Participate in our silent auction !**

**Bring friends, neighbours, and relatives  
 to join in our celebration**

*For further information please contact  
 Patricia 416-622-5274 or  
 Julia 416-622-6309 (h) / 416-621-8050 (w)*

*Come with us to see*

***The Met at Cineplex  
 Odeon***

*Captured Live in HD in New York*

***Iphégenie En  
 Tauride***

*A Gluck Opera*



***Featuring Susan Graham,  
 Placido Domingo, and Paul Groves***

*In French with English subtitles,  
 an encore broadcast*

***Saturday, March 26, 2011, 1:00 pm***

*Queensway Cineplex Theater  
 1025 The Queensway, Toronto*

***Tickets: \$23***

***We have 10 reserved seats.***

***A Bloordale and Friends Event  
 Carpooling Available***

*For further information and tickets contact  
 Julia 416-622-6309 (h) / 416-621-8050 (w)*

**Annual  
 Congregational  
 Meeting**  
**Sunday, February 20, 2011**  
**Following Worship**

**Mark your calendar**

**MOVIE NIGHTS THE THIRD FRIDAY EVERY  
 MONTH**

The Bloordale Movie Night series on the third Friday evening of the month continues on **February 18th.** with Brian showing the film 'Signs' at 7 pm.

All are invited to come and watch the movie, have some popcorn, and join in brief discussion following. Speak to Brian if you would like to know more.

## OUT OF THE COLD

Bloordale United Church Outreach will once again be providing a dinner for the homeless at All Saints Anglican Church on Friday, February 18. We have been asked to provide a meal for approximately 100 guests, and this year it has been suggested that we provide chilli con carne instead of our traditional stew. The menu consists of soup (provided by a local merchant), chilli, coleslaw, pie and ice cream. In addition, we provide lunches for 50 guests consisting of a ham sandwich, cheese sandwich, cookies and a banana. We also provide subway tokens too.

We do need volunteers to help cook the meal for which we provide the recipe and ingredients; prepare the coleslaw; purchase or make the cookies and generally donate funds for us to purchase the necessary ingredients. This year we are asking that any funds be placed in your collection envelopes, duly noted on the outside and should you not have envelopes, please place your donation in a plain envelope marking your name and amount on the outside.

Please speak to Jill Donaghy or Shirley Scott after Sunday's service to register your involvement and to get further information.

### OPENING BLUE JAYS GAME

We have again purchased tickets for the Blue Jays home opener, Friday evening April 1st, at 7:00 pm

#### Blue Jays vs Minnesota Twins

18 seats in field level first base, Section 113A, rows 10/11/12;

\$ 48.00 each

Call Julia for information/tickets, 416-622-6309; car pooling available

### PANCAKE SUPPER

The Pancake Supper returns to Bloordale on

**Shrove Tuesday,**

**March 8th, 2011**

**Two sittings : 5 pm and 6:30 pm**

**\$ 7.00 / \$4.00 for children under 12**

To volunteer or for information/tickets, call John or Julia 416-622-6309

### CHILDREN'S CRAFT NIGHT

Every Friday evening from  
February 18th through March 4th  
Children ages 4 to 10 welcome

At Bloordale

6:30 to 8 pm, \$ 3.00 per Friday

Please call church office to register

416-621-1710

### PLANNED GIFT FUND

If you would like information concerning Planned Giving please contact the minister or a member of your committee, in confidence.

Rev. Brian McIntosh, Jim Donaghy, Ross Howey, Greg Waterman or Bob Hitchcock

### ***Brian Goes to Bethlehem!***

From February 22<sup>nd</sup> to March 3<sup>rd</sup> Brian is looking forward with excitement and anticipation to being in Bethlehem, in the holy land, attending an International Conference with others from around the world on the topic *Challenging Empire: God, Faithfulness and Resistance*.

As part of the Conference on site visits will be made to Hebron, the Old City of Jerusalem, refugee camps, the Wall, checkpoints, Palestinian villages, and more.

Hosted by Sabeel, an organization with friends around the world and whose Arabic name means "the way," this Conference is the 8<sup>th</sup> annual, and has attracted scholars, leaders and activists from around the world, making it an unprecedented learning opportunity.

The emphasis, of course, will be on Israel's illegal occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and on how to build momentum toward securing a just peace through the upholding of human rights for the Palestinians and an end to the occupation.

Brian will very likely have an event upon his return to share some of his learnings, so keep an eye to the bulletin and an ear to the ground in March so you can attend!

Continued from page 1

The scholars agreed that the theme suggested a deep and dividing contrast between action in hope and action in despair, inviting reflection upon transformation of: "the world from chaos to new creation; the people of God from weariness to glad obedience; the human person from death to life." They also asserted that the theme "invites social analysis of the actions of despair in every dimension of life, undertaken by the powers of despair in a world of technique (technology and therapy) increasingly emptied of human depth and community – actions of acquisitiveness, hate, alienation, brutality, and violence – that reduce: the world to chaos; the people of God to paralysis; human persons to abandonment."

Furthermore, they said, the theme "invites strategic planning on the part of the church ... as a counteractor of hope in every dimension of life concerning:

- economic disparities midst God's abundance;
- political oppression midst God's justice;
- environmental exploitation midst God's fruitfulness;
- destruction of the social fabric of health, education, and welfare midst God's homemaking;
- the claims of natural sciences midst the mystery of God;
- destruction of community via class, race, gender in the midst of God's vision of unity;
- deep and lethal despair among those who have received 'everything' and whose lives yet are absent of joy."

They concluded this way: "Reflections on hope, social analysis, and strategic planning depend upon the capacity of the people of God in mission to practice a hope that is rooted solely in God's own hope, that must be informed by the reality of the world, but that is, in the end, unfettered by the world's fearfulness and anxiety. It is an open question whether the church can be, or become, unfettered to face the present summons of the gospel, given its careless, long-standing enmeshment in the fearfulness and anxiety of the world."

God's call to us, at every moment, is to be the answer to that open question and respond to the summons of the gospel as a people in mission, which is simply action in hope. May we be blessed as we pursue God's purposes for us in this world God created and recreates every day!

<sup>1</sup> Taken from *Hope for the World*, ed. by Walter Brueggemann, (Westminster/John Knox Press, Louisville, 2001), pgs. 161-162.

## Holy Humour

While walking along the sidewalk in front of his church, a minister heard the intoning of a prayer that nearly made his collar wilt.

Apparently, his 5-year-old son and his playmates had found a dead robin. Feeling that proper burial should be performed, they had secured a small box and cotton batting, then dug a hole and made ready for the disposal of the deceased.

The minister's son was chosen to say the appropriate prayers and with sonorous dignity intoned his version of what he thought his father always said:

'Glory be unto the Faaather, and unto the Sonnn, and into the hole he goooes.'

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## SUNDAY

*"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath; so the Son of Man is Master even of the Sabbath."*

*Mark 2:27*

A family was on its way to a Sunday outing in the mountains. It was midmorning when they drove by a church. Worshippers, dressed in their Sunday best, were gathered at the front entrance.

From the back seat of the car came the voice of five-year-old Karen: 'Daddy, aren't we going to church today?'

In the front seat both father and mother exchanged embarrassed glances.

Since the question had been addressed to him, the father felt obliged to answer.

'We can worship God in the mountains,' was his short reply.

There was a brief moment of silence, the from the back seat came the sage observation of which only a five-year-old is capable: 'But we won't, Daddy, will we?'

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## PRESS BLUNDERS

Classified ad.

Career opportunity for fire-fighter position We offer a smoke-free environment.

*Calgary Herald*

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### **Stewardship Spot**

*"Stewardship is everything I do after I say 'I believe'."*

In the last Bloorbeat I promised part two of Where the Youth Are – so here it is! Given the challenges and changes of youth culture, outlined in part one, it seems clear that one of the first areas of needed attention to make a difference is helping youth to be proactive toward consumerism. We as Christian parents can provide opportunities for action about specific industries, such as food or clothes or cosmetics, by beginning with what I'll call "awareness lobs," namely tidbits of useful information that appeals to a teen's natural conscience for fairness, justice, peace. You can then continue to explore how time and money are being used by the companies, and encourage over time a little more in depth social analysis about who benefits from profits, etc.

A second area to examine is the building of a healthy and still humble sense of self-esteem within and among youth. Peer pressure to conform is enormous these days, affecting decisions that teens make on a daily, hourly, even moment by moment basis. We need to nurture a strong sense of self in youth, so that standing up to the status quo in small or large groups is possible when a question of justice, such as the inclusion or exclusion of newcomers, those of average looks, or already marginalized youth such as gays and lesbians is at stake. How young people spend their money, on clothes or entertainment or information technology, is a reflection of who they believe themselves to be. How can we instill a strong sense of character and confidence, and yet a gracious humility, in our children, so that their values, hopefully formed in part by faith in God's big picture for their lives and the planet, can be put to practical effect? Respect and dignity are not something to be claimed only later in life. They need to be part of the now of our teen's life, both working along a two-way street – self-respect and respect for others, for example.

A third area to be faced is that immediate attitudes have long-term consequences. Every generation, extending back to the Bible and beyond, has had to struggle with the results of decisions about lifestyles, the accumulation of resources, vocational choices, etc. Youth pregnancy is a huge challenge, for instance, and the consequences of one spontaneous choice are, in that instance, life long. But something less fateful, such as a chosen career path, can lead to a life of either drudgery, on the one hand, or an endless but illusory climb to the top, with consequences adding up each step of the way.

Faith speaks of a life of service, and Frederick Buechner once gave some helpful advice when he said that a vocation, a call from God, happens when your deepest gladness meets the world's deepest needs. We can and should help young people ask hard questions about the long-term effects and consequences of our current decisions and actions.

Finally, Christians can always find opportunities for faithful stewardship discussions where abundance meets disadvantage. Books, movies, drama, videos, music, field trips, scripture reflections, worships experiences, even something as simple or mundane as a grace at mealtimes, alongside a host of other things, can provide rich settings for educating, or drawing out, our youth. To be believable in the eyes of youth, believers must be willing to demonstrate comprehensive Christian stewardship in worship, relationships, decision-making, and all aspects of both our personal and professional lives. So relate your real life experiences about what and where you buy things, what you choose to watch or see, your relationships, the economy and social issues, and the like to your image of Jesus, the Human One, the suffering servant, and to the faithful practices of the early church as stewards of God's good gifts – and have some fun along the way! – and see if your teenager doesn't begin to sound like they've been listening! Blessings as you try!

Brian

### **BLOORBEAT PUBLICATION SCHEDULE**

Following is the publication schedule and the deadlines for submissions for upcoming issues through June 2011.

<b>Publication Date</b>	<b>Submission Deadline</b>
	<b>2011</b>
March 20th	March 11th .
May 22nd	May 13th

Bloorbeat is published 7 times a year by the Communications Committee of

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