

# BLOORBEAT

The Newsletter of



Volume XXX, Issue 1

## Minister's Message

On January 6<sup>th</sup>, the 12<sup>th</sup> day of Christmas ... is Epiphany. The basics are familiar: the coming of the Magi, taking down the tree, putting away the decorations.

But there's more to the story than "We Three Kings." In the early church, the celebrations of what we now call Christmas and Epiphany were wrapped up into one celebration – some authorities hold that they weren't separated until as late as 813 C.E. (though most place it in the fourth century). In the eastern church, among the Orthodox, Christ's birth was remembered on January 6<sup>th</sup>, the date of an Egyptian solstice festival, and the focus was as much on Jesus' baptism in the Jordan as on the visit of the Magi.

The season after Epiphany has traditionally been an opportunity for focus on mission, since the visit of the Wise Ones – the first non-Jews to pay homage to Jesus – symbolizes the universal extension among all cultures and peoples of Christ's reign of love. The three are depicted in popular icons and images as a European, an African, and an Asian. Their search for Jesus is thereby a sign that Christ's salvation knows no boundaries; the Epiphany story provides an occasion for pondering the call of the gospel to reconciliation across racial, ethnic, national, gender, age and other boundaries.

The Christian-Jewish link is also prominent. The great saint, Augustine, wrote that Christmas and its closing observance, Epiphany, are like two sides of an arch, representing "*our Jewish and Gentile inheritance*" – Jewish shepherds visited him at birth, and Gentile Magi came soon after.

The story of the Magi's visit has other, more unsettling implications, mostly ignored in contemporary churches – perhaps because the terrible undercurrents are out of sync with the jingle-bells and ho-ho-hos of modern Christmas celebrations, with their insistence on excessive happiness. Herod's cruelty and death-dealing, the feast of the Holy Innocents, is rarely observed in Protestant churches, but it belongs in the context of a post-Epiphany season as well, the powers of the world still dealing death to innocent victims through poverty, war, neglect.

*Continued on page 5*

## 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

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

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## LOOKING AT THE WEEKS AHEAD

- **Sunday, January 16** - 2nd Sunday after Epiphany
- **Friday, January 21** - Movie Night "Field of Dreams" 7:00 p.m.
- **Sunday, January 23** - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - Communion
- **Sunday, January 30** - Emmanuel College Sunday  
Guest Preacher: Homiletics Professor The Rev. Paul Scott Wilson
- **Saturday, February 5** - TSO Concert  
"How the Gimquat Found Her Song" 3:30 p.m. Roy Thomson Hall
- **Sunday, February 6** - 5th Sunday after Epiphany
- **Friday, February 11** - Children's Craft Night - 6:30 p.m.
- **Saturday, February 12** - *Seven Rivers Chorus of Canada* Reunion Concert
- **Sunday, February 13** - 6th Sunday after Epiphany
- **Sunday, February 20** - 7th Sunday after Epiphany  
Annual Congregational Meeting
- **Sunday, February 27** - 8th Sunday after Epiphany

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

## BLOODDALE ATTENDS ROM EXHIBIT

Taking a break from the Christmas holidays, 15 Bloordale family and friends went to the ROM (Royal Ontario Museum) on Wednesday December 29<sup>th</sup>, to see "the Warrior Emperor and China's Terracotta Army".

The exhibit was in the basement of the museum; to avoid overcrowding, entry was time ticketed: our entry time was 1:30 p.m. Upon entering, we learned some history of Ying Zheng (259BC-210BC), who was the king of the Chinese state of Qin, in tail end of the "Warring States" period of Chinese history. This "Warring States" period lasted for almost 200 years, and ended when Ying Zheng became the first emperor of a unified China in 221 BC. When Ying Zheng died, he interred himself with a large army of terracotta warriors.

We saw 10 of these 2200 year old terracotta figures up close; warriors, council men, chariot horses. Further on, display cases of small horses with riders, and terra cotta farm animals looked out at us. A few replica figurines were also on display, and we could touch these, something we could not do with the originals.

After seeing the exhibit, most of us went upstairs to the Food Studio for a rest, a beverage and chit chat.

As this was the last week of the exhibit, the ROM was open until 8:30 p.m. but we did not stay until closing.

Thanks to all for coming.

A wonderful time was had by all.

## SILENT AUCTION RETURNING TO BLOODDALE

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.

## UPCOMING CONCERTS

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

As you plan into 2011, please mark these two confirmed Bloordale concerts in your calendars.

#### **Saturday February 12<sup>th</sup>, evening** **Seven Rivers Chorus of Canada**

*A concert featuring Mervin Fick's choir that toured Europe last summer*

#### **Saturday May 14<sup>th</sup>, evening** **Naparima Alumni Association of Canada**

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

## Hats Off to . . .

### TO SUNDAY COUNTERS



A great vote of thanks is due at this time to **Ross Prout** for the many, many years he has faithfully devoted to Bloordale as supervisor of the Sunday counters. He has been extremely diligent and

reliable and we wish him all the best in his well deserved retirement from this very important function.

We also thank the many kind individuals who have been counting on Sundays after the service for years. Your commitment has been much appreciated.

The Finance Committee has approved a new system for the foreseeable future. The counting will be done on Monday mornings in the office, with Juanita providing the continuity, assisted by one member of the congregation. The willingness of those who have agreed to participate in this new role is very much appreciated.

## 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.

*Come with your grandchildren, children,  
or other young people to see and hear*

## “How the Gimquat Found Her Song”

A rare and silent bird lives in hiding until  
she meets a magician who takes her on  
a search for the perfect song

**A TSO concert with Platypus Theater**  
**Especially for audience members ages 5-12**



[www.tso.ca](http://www.tso.ca)

**Saturday, Feb 5, 2011, 3:30 pm**  
**at Roy Thomson Hall**  
**60 Simcoe Street, Toronto**  
**(at King Street West and Simcoe)**

*We have 15 seats in section C1, rows T and U,  
Tickets are \$20 for seniors, students and children,  
\$27 for others*

*Come half an hour early for a special  
pre-concert performance in the lobby*

### *A Bloordale and Friends Event*

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

# Annual Congregational Meeting

**Sunday, February 20, 2011**  
**Following Worship**

**Mark your calendar**

## **BLESSINGS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR**

from the members of the **Pastoral Care Committee.**

We thank all those who responded and or planned to respond to our various requests this past year.

At the start of 2011 we have the following requests:

1. We would like to have a list of people needing rides to church combined with a list of those willing to volunteer to take turns providing rides. Anyone who fits in either category, please contact Sylvia Williams at 416-622-1928.
2. Throughout the year we try to recognize members who are celebrating youthful birthdays of 80 years and over as well as those experiencing any significant life changing or altering events.

If you have greeting cards lying around please consider donating them to the committee.

If you are aware of a member who is celebrating the birthdays or events mentioned please let Sylvia know (In situations of a delicate nature please ensure the individual consents to the sharing of the information).

If you have greeting cards lying around please consider donating them to the committee.

Peace Sylvia---

## **MOVIE NIGHTS THE THIRD FRIDAY EVERY MONTH**

The Bloordale Movie Night series on the third Friday evening of the month continues on **January 21<sup>st</sup>**, with Brian showing the film *Field of Dreams* 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.

## **Living the Questions DVD Study with John Dominic Crossan**

For four **Monday evenings** beginning **January 17<sup>th</sup>** and concluding **February 7<sup>th</sup>**, Brian will be hosting a Living the Questions DVD Study Series featuring John Dominic Crossan entitled **Victory and Peace or Justice and Peace?** The four seminars, all from 7 to 8:30 pm, will be on the following topics: 1) Justice and the World – the Character of your God; 2) History and Jesus – the Content of your Faith; 3) Worship and Violence – the Purpose of your Prayer; 4) Resurrection and Community – the Function of your Church. This series promises to be stimulating, with enriching discussion among those who attend. Plan to be there! You can speak to Brian for more

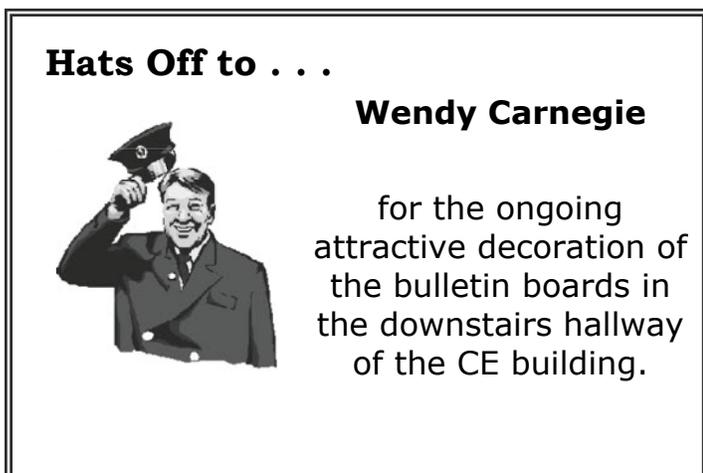


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But the season is not ultimately Herod's; it rightly belongs to the one who incarnates the living God, the One whose mission and ministry of healing and hope is the focus of this season and the source and lure of our discipleship. Our hope is made tangible and unconquerable because God loved us enough to send his only Son, to guide us into the light of a new day and a new way, namely God's. In that epiphany, which means "revelation," all things are made new, and our faith is made fresh to risk new possibilities.

This month leaders of Bloordale, both lay people and lead staff, gather to discuss the future of our church, and potential directions for our rejuvenation and renewal. We continue to face challenges and slow decline, though the congregation lives out an active and increasingly diverse ministry and has risen to the occasion well in recent financial campaigns. We trust the leading of the Spirit as we undertake this discernment exercise in retreat, and hope that when we formulate tangible plans to share with the congregation at our Annual Meeting on February 20<sup>th</sup>, we'll enjoy widespread participation in the conversation and support for the directions we believe God is calling us, by Epiphany light, to take – like the Magi (and poet Robert Frost!), perhaps a somewhat different road, one less travelled by. Blessings one and all for 2011, and let us each discern how we may take up the call of God, together and individually, with new vigor in the weeks and months ahead.

Brian



## REVIEW OF 2010 FINANCIAL RESULTS

The Finance Committee would like to thank the congregation for the strong support of the church's financial needs over the past two years. 2010 has been a good year. However, there is both a good news story and a bad news story involved.

The good news is that, as a result of the approximately \$24,000. contributed by the congregation to the Securing a Sound Future Fund Raising Campaign in 2010, added to the \$38,000. contributed in 2009, we have eliminated a large deficit in the Operating Fund, repaid 2 outstanding loans to the United Church and re-established an acceptable operating cash position. We estimate at this time that we will have ended 2010 with a surplus of approximately \$12,000. in our Operating Fund as compared to the large deficits that existed over the past few years.

The bad news is that we ended 2010 below budget in our congregational contributions for local operating expenses by \$6,429 and incurred an overall operating deficit for the year of \$5,112. The details of these results will be explained at the Annual Congregational Meeting in February.

We will end by saying that in spite of the fact that we have ended 2010 in good shape, 2011 is going to be a challenging year financially, a subject that will also be dealt with in detail when we review the 2011 budgets at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

Please be aware that any dollar amounts quoted in this statement are from the unaudited results and could change in the audited financial statements.

Your Finance Committee

### **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.

Come with us to a  
**Free Concert**

at the  
*Four Seasons Centre  
for the Performing Arts*

**Beethoven and Shostakovich: Duos and  
Trios, with Piano, Cello and Violin**



[www.coc.ca](http://www.coc.ca)

**Thursday Jan 20, 2011  
12:00 - 1:00 pm  
145 Queen Street West  
(at University Avenue)**

Part of the Free Chamber Music Concert Series,  
in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre

Bring a sandwich, or have lunch downtown after the performance

*A Bloordale and Friends Event*

**Carpooling Available, or take the TTC**

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

## When & Where

FROM HEAD TO HEART  
December 27, 1518

Theological ideas alone cannot save, but they can be the seeds of spiritual transformation.

Ulrich Zwingli was not born an idealistic revolutionary. Although he was intelligent and well educated, it was his training not his spiritual passion that led him into the ministry. In short, the ideas of the Early Church Fathers made sense to Zwingli, but he lacked true spiritual devotion.

This rift between head and heart manifested itself when, amid his persuasive sermons and popular ministry in the Swiss town of Glarus, someone exposed Zwingli's wanton relationship with a mistress. His conscience was pricked but not yet transformed. At this time, Zwingli reluctantly accepted a post at Einsiedeln, a monastery and place of pilgrimage.

As he preached about God's grace, Zwingli began to find the rituals and trappings of the Roman Catholic Church lacking, and he publicly denounced the local seller of papal indulgences. Surmising that grace could not be bought and sold, Zwingli sought the Scriptures for an understanding of free grace.

Only God knows when Zwingli discovered this saving grace for himself, but at Einsiedeln, Zwingli publicly confessed his own sins and declared Christ's saving grace to be sufficient. Soon, officials from Zurich noticed his powerful oratory. They had reservations about his past reputation, but he appeared changed. They soon invited him to become priest at the Zurich Great Church. He arrived in Zurich on December 27, 1518.

Zwingli entered a city primed for the Reformation. His employers had little idea they were hiring a Reformer, and Zwingli himself might not have known how much he would change. Zurich's citizens, known for their fine army and penchant for political independence, were drawn to their new preacher.

Zwingli found himself preaching in the marketplace on Fridays so the crowds from surrounding villages might hear him. He proclaimed the sufficiency of faith in Christ, the deficiency of superstition and indulgences, the necessity of true repentance and godly living, and the importance of caring for the poor and needy, the widow and orphan.

And widows and orphans there would be. In the summer of 1519, the plague arrived in Zurich. Three out of ten people died. Zwingli diligently ministered throughout the ravaged city. While attending to the sick and dying, he also became ill and nearly died.

Zwingli eventually recovered and went on to become the leading figure in the Reformation in German-speaking Switzerland. But it was just a matter of time before war broke out between Protestants and the armies of the pope. A lifelong military chaplain, Zwingli died on the Kappel battlefield in 1531, defending a threatened freedom: the preaching of the gospel he had come to know and love.

**COMING SOON TO BLOORDALE**  
**Friday night children's craft classes**  
**- Feb 11 to March 4th**  
**- 6:30 to 8:00 pm**  
**STAY TUNED FOR MORE INFO**

Crafters needed:

Please Volunteer for one, two, three or all four sessions  
For info and to volunteer, call Julia Stavreff at 416-622-6309(h)/416-621-8050(w)

## Stewardship Spot

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

### Where the Youth Are (Part 1 of 2)

I suspect we've all been to a fast food "restaurant" in the past few months, and encountered there the youth – or senior! - behind the counter who smile at us as if on cue. But have you ever considered that perhaps the fast food industry is an appropriate metaphor of the situation in which our youth find themselves these days?

In a consumer culture, preteens and teens quite easily take their place in patterns of easy spending and easy waste. It's likely a general truth that young people think more of an immediate time frame than a future one, consuming first and pondering the implications second, if at all. More than that, though, young people themselves become a consumer commodity.

The rest of us are all led to believe by mass media that looking, thinking, feeling, and acting younger than we are is of great value. Industries offering food, clothing, cosmetics, cars, movies, music, etc. market their products with youth foremost in their strategies. Youth are not only the model and the customer, but often are the labor as well. They are cheap to employ, will work long hours, and do it for little or no benefits. They are replaceable in the workplace, and easily "trained." They are the best deal little money can buy!

Published surveys of youth themselves in the last decade indicate that they are far more interested in jobs to earn immediate expendable income than were previous generations, including mine. There seems to be less general interest in self-fulfillment, skill development, investment or saving, career choice, construction of a worldview that sustains, creation of healthy relationships, and other goals which have figured prominently in the past - though there are numerous clear exceptions among exceptional youth. And this is alongside a burgeoning and ever changing technological lure to the latest "thing," which also downshifts the world of youth to immediate gratification and connections that are narrowing – who talks with youth for more than two minutes at a time anymore, as the texting and BBMing take over?

Like the food, the building, and the uniform of fast food franchises, life is shaped by sameness, even while advertising uniqueness and independence. There is a struggle and a paradox here – the severely limited freedom to choose mass-produced options. Relationships center on few words, lots of stuff, on audio or visual stimulation and electronic transaction, on collecting "experiences" and on sampling or tasting but not taking the time to learn how to digest, analyze, or nurture life.

Youth, it seems, live in a world of false independence, temporary pleasure, limited contracts, the exploitation of desire, and severely simplified notions of responsibility. Today's youth have generally opted out of institutional politics, with voter turnouts falling and party politics losing youth wings left and right - though there is plenty of action among groups of youth to try to save the planet and the environment, through action on this or that particular issue.

It is in this world, friends, that the church, as followers of Jesus Christ, dares to raise the concern of Christian stewardship, of nurturing long-term commitment for life among all people and not just the privileged, of political and cultural change that will systematically shape and save the planet from environmental destruction, of life-giving relationships of commitment and care that cross generations and are sustained over time, of a larger-than-self, God-centered worldview that enables selfless service and consistent ethical, political, cultural reflection on the big issues of the day – justice, peace, poverty, the care of creation, right relationships. This is the call that comes to us, to know where the youth are and to relate to them in ways that inspire and transform! God help us in our quest!

*(this topic is important enough to have a Part 2 in the next Bloorbeat – look for it!)*

## BLOORBEAT PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

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

Publication Date	Submission Deadline
	<b>2011</b>
February 13th	February 4th
March 20th	March 11th .
May 22nd	May 13th

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

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