



## **Christ Presbyterian Church Unfoldings**

**December 2008**

Forty years ago Margaret Craven wrote a beautiful little book entitled, I Heard the Owl Call My Name. It is a story of a young priest sent to serve an isolated parish of native peoples in the upcoast of British Columbia. Mark, the young priest, is careful not to force himself into the life of the tribe, but instead, he listens and waits and serves.

In many ways Mark is a Christ figure in the story, especially so since from the beginning the reader is informed that Mark is ill and will only live another two or three years. The reader is never really sure if Mark knows his fate or not. Actually, though, there are many Christ figures in the story, each a loving, listening presence to other members of the tribe and each willing to offer both their living and dying in service to the whole.

I first read I Heard the Owl Call My Name when I was thirteen years old, and I re-read it once more this past summer. It reminded me again that none of us are whole unto ourselves alone, that it takes an openness to and participation in others for us to realize our true humanity.

There is a Buddhist saying that each of us must walk our own road, learn our own truth, and endure our own death, but it never implies that we can do that in isolation. Being part of a community of faith means that we walk and learn and endure in loving community with one another.

At a turning point in his relationship with the tribe, Mark has prepared everything for the Christmas Eve service when he steps "without expectation into one of those moments that is suspended between time and space and lingers in the mind":

"He saw the lights of the houses go out, one by one, and the lanterns begin to flicker as the tribe came slowly, single file along the path to the church. How many times had they traveled thus through the mountain passes down from the Bering Sea?

He went to the door and opened it, and he stepped out into the soft white night, the snow whispering now under the footfalls. For the first time he knew them for what they were, the people of his hand and the sheep of his pasture, and he knew how deep was his commitment to them. When the first of the tribe reached the steps, he held out his hand to greet each by name. But first he spoke to himself, and he said, 'Yes, my Lord.'"

Peace be with you,  
Pat Bailey

### Stewardship

Most Presbyterian Churches conduct their stewardship season during October and November, but due to the nature of life in Telluride with its off-seasons, Christ Church will kick off its stewardship campaign this Sunday, December 7. The Stewardship Committee has been working hard to provide the information, resources, and encouragement to assist you in making a prayerful decision about your support of our church and programs. May God's Spirit that so enchants the Christmas season with such a deep sense of God's presence and blessings inspire in us a spirit of generosity and a shared vision for the future of Christ Presbyterian Church.

## Special December Events at Christ Church

Sunday, Dec. 7 - The Second Sunday of Advent  
Greening of the Church

Wednesday, Dec. 10, 7:00 PM - Choral Society Concert

Thursday, Dec. 11, 6:00 PM - Women's Christmas Dinner

Friday, Dec. 12, 7:00 PM - Choral Society Concert

Sunday, Dec. 14 - The Third Sunday of Advent

Tuesday, Dec. 16, 7:00 PM - Choral Society Concert

Sunday, Dec. 21 - Fourth Sunday of Advent  
Children's Christmas Program

Wednesday, Dec. 24, 6:30 & 8:00 PM - Christmas Eve Services

Sunday, Dec. 28 - First Sunday after Christmas

To view a calendar that includes all our regularly scheduled events and special events go to our web site at [www.telluridechristchurch.com](http://www.telluridechristchurch.com).

## Christian Spiritual Education

Our adult education series *Living the Questions* will resume on Friday, December 5, at 12:00 noon. Friday topics for December will include "The Prophetic Jesus," "Evil Suffering and a God of Love," and "The Myth of Redemptive Violence." The lessons are video based; so you do not have to have attended any of the other classes to join us or to benefit. Bring a lunch if you desire and gather with us for this thought and faith provoking series.

Our Children's Church is conducted during the Sunday worship hour and is taught by Maureen Reese, a teacher at Telluride Elementary School. In December the children will learn about friendship from the Bible story of David and Jonathan and will give a presentation of the Christmas story in our Sunday worship on December the 22<sup>nd</sup>

Please join our pastor and elders in prayer as we seek to discern new opportunities for our spiritual education and practice. One new program being considered is a weekly gathering called Ancient Practices. The program would focus on spiritual practices such as prayer, discernment, and meditation and would concentrate on one discipline for a month of meetings. The schedule might look something like the following:

February - Contemplation and Centering Prayer  
March - Lectio Divina, Meditation on Scripture  
April - Visualization in Prayer and Meditation  
June - The Labyrinth and Walking Prayer  
July - Contemplation in Nature  
August - Spirituality in Everyday Life  
October - Daily and Occasional Ritual  
November - Body Posture and Movement in Prayer  
December - Music and Chant as Spiritual Practice

### Christ Church's Website

Exciting things are happening with our church website. A calendar of programs and happenings at the church will soon be posted for easy access. Our church's newsletter, *Christ Presbyterian Church Unfoldings*, will be posted on the site and visitors can sign up there to receive the newsletter by e-mail. A weekly message will be posted by the pastor as a blog, which means that viewers can send comments in response to the message. There will be links to other sites such as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) or the Center for Progressive Christianity. We also hope to begin video recording our services and posting the videos on the website to be viewed by our absent members or anyone else who has an interest. In other words, the site is becoming much more interactive

with multiple resources available to our members and the wider community. Changes to the site are being made each week and some of the features mentioned above will be completed during December. So, check out and keep checking out the Christ Presbyterian Church website at [www.telluridechristchurch.com](http://www.telluridechristchurch.com).

