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Contact:

111 Superior St.
Victoria, BC V8V 1T2
250-382-5412
<http://cotvictoria.ca>



Weren't We Tribal, What of the Social Now?

“The Tribe” is the general word title for the topics to be mentally danced with this January, here at the Church of Truth. Now, the gist of this “tribal” is in how we human communities of today set it all up, in how our community builds itself. But more trimming of the scope brings us to a varied albeit arbitrary set of subtopics.

The early indicators for the year’s trends have traditionally been viewed at the beginning of the year. The tribal celebration precedes the first day of the New Year and the First day will be finding the doors open for a special 2012 New Years Service.

“Begin to be now what you will be hereafter.”

[William James](#)

Then on January 8, we will soar with music, transcending time, space and place. I believe singing together will be featured along with vocal gifts of Shivon Robinsong.

“I think music in itself is healing. It's an explosive expression of humanity. It's something we are all touched by. No matter what culture we're from, everyone loves music.”

[Billy Joel](#)

“I believe the world is one big family, and we need to help each other.”

[Jet Li](#)

January 15, the topic of “Spiritual Family” will bring its features forward through the engaging speakers, Sanjara Omoniyi and Roland Guenther.

“Family, nature and health all go together.”

[Olivia Newton-John](#)

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The Lighthouse January 2012

A Newsletter for Friends of the Church
The Church of Truth - Community of Conscious Living
Sunday Service – 11:00 am

We are a spiritual community supporting each other in exploring our personal journeys regardless of spiritual path or belief.

Our community is comprised of a rich field of individual and collective energies that is ever changing and evolving.

While we are accepting of diverse expressions of belief, we recognize the interconnectedness of all things and the power of love and appreciation. We hold reverence for all life.

We welcome those who wish to share their journey with us through their insights, reflections, experience and creative self-expression.

We are open to inspiration and recognize that our openness to others' ideas may enhance our own awareness and expansion.

We meet our basic human need to socialize, bond, cooperate, celebrate and have fun, in a warm-hearted way, through a variety of events and activities.

We acknowledge our opportunity to be agents of change in the world and we encourage and support service to others through individual and group activity.

We share our sacred space with the larger community.

With gratitude, we live thoughtfully on the Earth with kindness and compassion for all.

We welcome you.

Working for you - Your Board of Directors

President/Rentals	Esther Hart	250-896-5933
Past President/SDC Liaison	Brian Martin	778-430-1872
Vice President/Inside Maintenance	Patti Huot	250-385-0941
Treasurer	Pat Chapman	250-479-1761
Secretary	Cynthia Pattison	778-433-0261
Rentals	Esther Hart	250-896-5933
Outside Maintenance	Sanjara Omoniyi	250-857-8185
Member at Large	Jan Falkowski	250-370-9192

Your Spiritual Directions Committee Members are:

Trish Coleman	250-721-1973
Laurence Beal	250-380-6249
Marvelous Trudeau	250-384-2563
Bernadine Sperling	250-384-5721
Susan Blackwood	250-889-5335

Community Care Liaison – Lorna Rennie 361-2079

Newsletter—Deborah Hawkey Email dbhawkey@gmail.com

Newsletter Submissions welcomed by the 21st. of each month

Linda Chan <http://cotvictoria.ca>

Rev. Joan Hopper Pastoral Care for free consultation call 250-384-3637

Sunday Service Schedule for January 2012

Theme: The Tribe

January 1st	New beginnings - A special New Years Service
	Coordinator: Susan Blackwood Facilitator: Susan Blackwood Meditation: Silent (Facilitator holds the space)
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January 8th	Music Transcends Time Space and Place
	Coordinator: Patricia Coleman Moderator: Trish Coleman Meditation: Sanjara Omoniyi Speaker: Shivon Robinson Greeter: Bernadine Sperling
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January 15	Spiritual Family
	Coordinator: Bernadine Sperling Moderator: Bernadine Sperling Meditation: Silent (Moderator holds the space) Speakers: Sanjara Omoniyi and Roland Guenther
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January 22	Agape: In the Modern Village
	Coordinator: Laurence Beal Moderator: Carol Douglas Meditation: Silent (Moderator holds the space) Panel Speakers: Laura Lane, Stephen Kinsella & Patti Huot Greeter: Laurence Beal
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January 29	Passion for Life - Community Service
	Coordinator: Marvelous Trudeau Moderator: Marvelous Trudeau

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On the fourth Sunday, January 22, we may find a delightful garden array of views with our panel of speakers. Tuning in to “agape,” or altruistic love, in the contexts of our modern culture or village norms will be the focus. The true order of Love manifesting may bring a task.

“There is a quality even meaner than outright ugliness or disorder, and this meaner quality is the dishonest mask of pretended order, achieved by ignoring or suppressing the real order that is struggling to exist and to be served.”

[Jane Jacobs](#)

Last but not least, January 29, we get to say our bits in the Community Service entitled “Passion for Life”. Marvelous will be leading us into an adventure, without a doubt.

“Believe in yourself! Have faith in your abilities! Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers you cannot be successful or happy.”

[Norman Vincent Peale](#)



Movie Night

The current plan is to have “Movie Night” the last Friday of each month. We will reserve that night unless we have the opportunity to rent the church for a full weekend workshop. Watch this newsletter and Linda’s weekly notices for any date changes.

January Movie Night is Friday, January 27. Arrive at 6:30 pm for pot-luck snacks and visiting. The movie starts at 7:00 pm. Stay after for discussion.

If you have suggestions for movies, please submit them to the board for consideration.

Watch for Linda’s weekly notices for details of the January selection.

Everyone is welcome.
Free or by donation.

*Happy Birthday
We celebrate with you!*

Marvelous Trudeau	Jan-12
Laura Lane	Jan-13
Agnes Amandrud	Jan-20
Brian Martin	Jan-25
Esther Hart	Jan-26
Pat Chapman	Jan-30



Up Close with Esther Hart



When I was born, my parents lived on a farm in rural, southern Manitoba with my order brother and sister. My mother went to the small Mennonite town of Steinbach, Manitoba, where her mother lived, for my birth. I don't remember life on the farm. We moved into the small town of Sidney, Manitoba when I was 2½.

My first clear memory of attending church regularly is after we moved to Brandon, Manitoba when I was six. By then I had a younger brother and soon after a younger sister. We went to the Christian and Missionary Alliance. I enjoyed going to church and had many friends there. I especially loved the singing. I sang in the junior choir and some smaller groups. Later I played the piano and organ for church services.

When I was nineteen, I moved to Thompson, Manitoba to become a teacher. By that time I had become aware that the type of Christianity my father taught wouldn't work for me. It seemed to be riddled with hypocrisy. I wanted a belief that I could truly live.

I don't recall going on a search. I just lived my life. I was shocked when my fiancé announced that we needed to be married in the Catholic Church. I had never seen him attend church. In fact, even way back then, I had no desire to have a marriage ceremony. But we both were aware that it would be necessary in order to be allowed to sleep together in our parents' homes. So we had a lovely Catholic wedding.

We also had our daughter, Michaela, baptized. Later, when she was preparing for her first communion, I had the thought that it was important for her spiritual experience to be a family experience so I also was baptized in the Catholic Church. We attended church regularly as a family until Michaela left home, yet it held no meaning for me. Then I quit attending.

During that time I read many books that gave me a different view of spirituality. I wanted to be completely free of my childhood beliefs and yet for a long time I couldn't watch televangelists because I had the feeling that I would be sucked back into the fear of going to hell. That gradually faded and then the fear disappeared completely.

Some months after my marriage ended, I had an episode of thinking I was going insane and a friend told me that it was a gift to help me acknowledge that I am not in control. I survived that time with the mantra, "I'm here. I'm willing. Show me." After that I considered that time the beginning of my "conscious journey." Carolyn Myss wrote that when the monks went on a journey of enlightenment, it was a given that they would experience insanity. That was a relief. She also said that part of opening to new ideas and beliefs was being betrayed by our old beliefs. I resonated with that. In 1997 I wrote my first book, *Journey to Personal Freedom*, outlining some of the insights that had created a new way of living for me.

Still I had no interest in attending a church of any kind. Then in 2001, my friend Inger introduced me to the Church of Truth - Community of Conscious Living. Here was a place that had no dogma. In my view, it was a place where I was encouraged and supported in my own path. At first I attended sporadically. Then in 2002 I decided that I wanted to make this my community and began attending regularly. I joined the board that spring and served on the board until I left for my 2½ years on Bowen Island.

There, in 2005, after years of "personal growth" and increasing "spiritual awareness" I found myself in the deepest, darkest pit of despair in my life. I couldn't recognize myself. I had known myself as someone who finds solutions for every situation. Setbacks were only momentary. In this despair, I felt hopeless. I was sure I wouldn't survive. As I look back I realize that my experience had nothing to do with reality. It was based entirely on my thoughts and my thoughts were out of my control. It was as if I had been invaded and someone else was running my life. It took three months before I experienced a glimmer of light.

I felt bruised for many months after. My former confidence was completely shaken. I woke up every morning dreading the day, knowing that I couldn't be enough, wouldn't do enough—that I was essentially worthless. Again, these thoughts and feelings were not based in reality. I was back at the church, serving on the board, earning a living and having an apparently beautiful life with family and friends.

Over time I realized that my time in “the pit of despair” had shattered more of my beliefs. The “spiritual” teachings of other people that I had accepted as true (even though they didn't resonate with me) had replaced the “religious” teachings that I had accepted in my childhood. It was time to let go of everything I heard that didn't fit with my inner voice. As I did so, I felt more and more freedom. I began waking in the morning rested and looking forward to the day without expectations of needing to accomplish anything. I am enough without doing anything.

As I settled into this way of being, I was guided to write *Giggle Factor – A Grownup Fairy Tale* which outlines my current way of living and how I got here. I call it a fairy tale so people won't think that I'm trying to tell them what's right for them. This is simply what works for me. It is a way of being completely free of hypocrisy.

I'm grateful for the community here at the Church of Truth – Community of Conscious Living. I'm grateful for the opportunity to be of service, for the friends I've made and the support to be truly me.

I'm delighted to see our community grow as more people come to find that support for themselves.

Submitted by Esther Hart



WHAT IS A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

A New Year's resolution is a commitment that an individual makes to one or more lasting personal goals, projects, or the reforming of a habit. According to Gretchen Rubin (author of best-seller "The Happiness Project"): "You hit a goal, you achieve a goal. You keep a resolution".

This lifestyle change is generally interpreted as advantageous. A New Year's Resolution is generally a goal someone sets out to accomplish in the coming year. Some examples include resolutions to donate to the poor more often, to become more assertive, or to become more environmentally responsible. A key element to a New Year's Resolution that sets it apart from other resolutions is that it is made in anticipation of the New Year, and new beginnings.

There are religious parallels to this secular tradition. During Judaism's New Year, Rosh Hashanah, through the High Holidays and culminating in Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement),

one is to reflect upon one's wrongdoings over the year and both seek and offer forgiveness. People may act similarly during the Christian fasting period of Lent, though the motive behind this holiday is more of sacrifice than of responsibility. The concept, regardless of creed, is to reflect upon self-improvement annually.

Success rate: Recent research shows that while 52% of participants in a resolution study were confident of success with their goals, only 12% actually achieved their goals. A separate study in 2007 by Richard Wiseman from the University of Bristol showed that 78% of those who set New Year resolutions fail, and those who succeed have 5 traits in common. Men achieved their goal 22% more often when they engaged in goal setting, (a system where small measurable goals are being set; such as, a pound a week, instead of saying "lose weight"), while women succeeded 10% more when they made their goals public and got support from their friends.

How to be successful: The desire of improving, the commitment to outperform is somehow inherent to the human being. However, most of these resolutions fail. Making a resolution is not enough, you need to structure a work plan to be successful and define the resolutions with a well thought methodology. We can create this roadmap with the following 7 steps:

- 1. Having the right mindset
- 2. Category identification
- 3. Selecting the resolution
- 4. Quantifying the resolution
- 5. Setting intermediate milestones
- 6. Setting the tracking tool
- 7. The tough decision: Abandon or persevere



Submitted by Deborah Hawkey

Oneness Wednesdays in January:

Church of Truth - 111 Superior Street, Victoria, BC
7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Drop-in to one or more evenings
Free or by Donation
50% of donations to the church and 50% to Outreach Projects
Info: <http://cotvictoria.ca> or Linda at 250-380-6383

Watch for Linda's weekly notices for details. If you are not on her list and would like to be, email Linda at cotvictoria@gmail.com.