

DECEMBER FOOD BANK—Items Requested & Needed:



Second Sunday of each month is dedicated to our Food Pantry.

Requested items are toiletries and definitely toilet paper, canned meats, breakfast foods. Frozen dinners, pot pies, instant potatoes, etc., are a great addition to offer to our guests as well. And bottled juices and water are also very much appreciated. We have been blessed with an over-abundance of canned veggies and chili and we have run out of storage for these canned items!

Office Supplies: Copy Paper 8-1/2 x 11 and 8-1/2 x 14 always seems to be needed every third month and we are there. Thanks.

Trivia Corner

December's Questions:

- 1) Which book of the Old Testament was written last?
- 2) Which book of the New Testament was written first?
- 3) Which Gospel account is not one of the Synoptic Gospels?
- 4) Who was Joanna? (Hint: check the Gospel according to Luke)
- 5) Biblical joke: Which Old Testament figure, besides Adam and Eve, had no human parents? (This is a pun that only works in English)

GLBT & Allies Study Group December 8 and 22nd at 7:00pm, EUCC Library

Please come and join this study group! We have just started studying a fascinating series of videos called "Living the Questions." This study looks at Christianity today. How we look at the Bible, what theology means, where did the Bible and other Christian teachings come from, etc. The video includes people like Marcus Borg, Bishop Shelby Spong and other men and women who are prominent scholars in the world today. Come and join us as we listen to what they say and join in discussion about our own faith's journey!

Refreshments are served!

Mimi Lane

Through a Mirror Dimly—2011



We live in an amazing time! For example, when I was growing up in the 40's, only the very rich had two cars and some families had none, but today many families have three or four!

Another example: Although the word cancer strikes fear in the hearts of nearly everyone, medical science has leap-frogged treatment protocols and has effected cures never thought possible 50 - 60 years ago.

Another example: We were the first on our block to have a television set in 1950 and every Friday night our living room was filled to overflowing with neighbors watching Friday night boxing. We could not have imagined the time when people would have two or three sets in one household, much less color TV, 3-D, high definition, quadraphonic sound, a picture within a picture, DVDs, not to mention Netflix!

When I was a kid, there was a cartoon strip in the Sunday funnies called "Dick Tracy" in which Tracy and his partner Sam Ketchum were police detectives who communicated by way of a two-way wrist radio with a video screen that enabled them to see one another during their conversation. Our grandson, Erik, is currently recovering from surgery and I texted him from my cell phone (another technological marvel that has become almost commonplace) and he said, "G-Pa, get your phone on wifi." I did as he asked and the next thing I knew, Violet and I could see Erik and we could see a small image of ourselves as we appeared to Erik on his phone. And he could see us (and himself) as we carried on our two way audio and video conversation! "Yesterday's science fiction becomes today's reality."

At a recent family gathering, our 11 year old honorary grandson, Marcus asked if he could use my personal computer (PC) and I said, "No, it isn't working, Marcus." "What's wrong with it?" he asked. "I don't know. I think it's the power supply." A few moments later, Marcus came to me and said, "Your PC is working." I said, "What did you do?" "Turned on the CPU," he replied. (And what's the CPU? you may ask. Basically, it's the on-off switch.) Now, lest you think I'm a complete idiot, I had tried that particular switch but it hadn't worked for me. This gave new meaning to the phrase, "and a little child shall lead them."

In the church, we observe the season of Advent, a time of expectation and anticipation, a time of waiting for an event that was utterly amazing to those who witnessed it: the birth of Jesus. The shepherds and the Magi didn't have cars to drive to Bethlehem. They traveled on foot or by camel. Mary and Joseph didn't have TV or e-mail. In fact, they had none of the creature comforts we take for granted. They had little more than the clothes on their back. Even so, the baby born that day over 2,000 years ago would have a more powerful and positive effect on the world than all our technological advances put together because he offered humankind a direct connection to God, the true source of all power, knowledge and unconditional love.

As we worship during the season of Advent and gather for Christmas Eve and Christmas morning services, may each of you experience the awe that stunned the shepherds on the hillside that night long ago. And, like the wise men, may your journey be guided by the star of Bethlehem to the infant Jesus. And, like Mary and Joseph, may you accept on faith what you cannot comprehend.

Merry Christmas and Blessings,

Pastor Steve

Notes and Dates for Transition Port Gardner (TPG) Events

What a great surprise! The Red Barn Community Farm received the 2011 Agency Collaboration Award from the Snohomish County Human Services Council for the Moving People, Moving Produce event. This event succeeded because TPG, Volunteers of America of Western Washington and many other groups and people partnered to move 2000 pounds (1 ton!) of food from the Red Barn Community Garden to the Food Bank. This was a major effort involving lots of organizing that provided food for the County's needy as well as creating partnerships and connections among local organizations and people, and did it all without the aid of fossil fuels to move the food.

The Coal Hard Truth forum event on October 26th was also a success. It was attended by 120 people. TPG has joined the Power Past Coal Coalition. The Sierra Club, which sponsors these events, has prevented 150 coal plants from being started and has shut down 90 coal plants. More forums will be held in the future in our area, so watch for dates.

Dean Smith's discussion group at the Firewheel restaurant is also continuing. It is on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays, which conflicts with our GLBT Bible Study, so he is considering moving it to another night so folks who attend the Bible Study can also participate. The next meeting is on Dec. 8th and energy will be the topic.

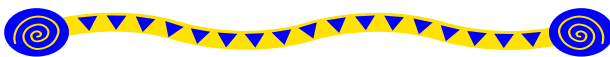
Upcoming Events:

January: Potluck With a Purpose will resume on the 2nd Sunday at 12:30, after church and coffee hour. We will celebrate being the 101st Transition Initiative. January is the 3rd anniversary of the Transition movement.

February: Jessie Dye will talk about the TransAlta Coal plant and current coal train status

March: Movie; Green Fire, the story of Aldo Leopold. He is known as the father of the environmental eco-management system, wrote A Land Ethic, one of the first philosophical statements of why it is important to protect the land from a Western perspective.

April: Part 2 of Green Fire

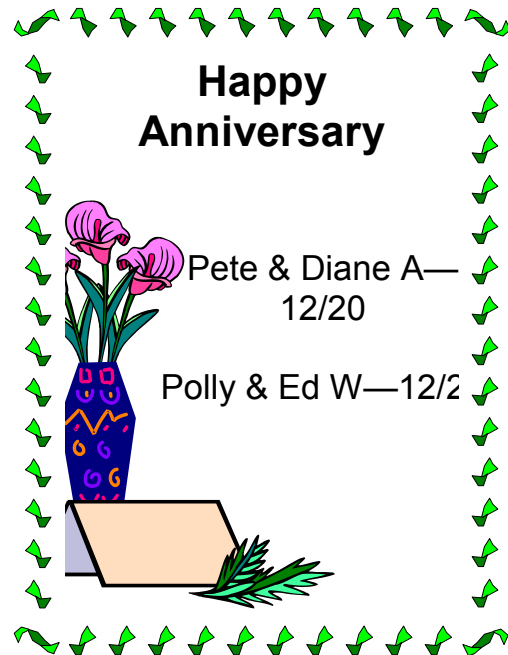


Chancel Choir is back and looking for others to join them in singing praises. Could that be you? Practice is every Tuesday in the Sanctuary. Come Join Us.



December

Mildie M—12/01
Stephanie S—12/07
Sharon G—12/11
Chrissie—12/16
Dennis M—12/16
Olivia B—12/19
Micah R—12/24
Seth R—12/30
Miriam J—12/31



Happy Anniversary

Pete & Diane A—
12/20

Polly & Ed W—12/2

Christian Trivia Questions/Answers

1) Who were Jacob's two wives?

ANSWER: Jacob's two wives were Leah and Rachel, the two daughters of Jacob's uncle Laban. Jacob initially fell in love with Rachel, and worked for his uncle Laban for seven years for the privilege of marrying her. On the wedding night, however, Laban gave Jacob his elder daughter Leah instead, and told Jacob he would have to work an additional seven years for Rachel. Leah bore Jacob six sons and one daughter. Rachel gave Jacob two sons, who became his favorites: Joseph and Benjamin (Genesis 29-38). It was Judah, Jacob's fourth son by Leah, however, who was the ancestor of both King David and Jesus (Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38).

2) How many children did Abraham have?

ANSWER: While only two of Abraham's children, Ishmael and Isaac, are famous, Abraham actually had eight children. Ishmael was the eldest, a son of Abraham's concubine Hagar. Isaac was the late-born son of his wife Sarah (Genesis 16-18). After Sarah's death Abraham married a woman named Keturah, who bore him six more sons (Genesis 25:1-6).

3) How many books of the Bible are attributed to John the Apostle?

ANSWER: Five books have traditionally been attributed to John the Apostle: The Gospel according to John; the three Epistles of John; and the Revelation of John the Divine. It is unlikely, however, that all five of these works were written by the same person, or that they were all penned by Christ's actual disciple. "John" was a very common given name among Jews in the first century AD. The markedly different writing styles of these works suggest that there were at least two and perhaps three or more New Testament authors named John. Moreover, the latest of these writings were produced at the end of the first century AD. Any disciple of Jesus would have to have been at least 90 years old at that time. This would be enormously unlikely, given that the average lifespan for men of the time was about 50.

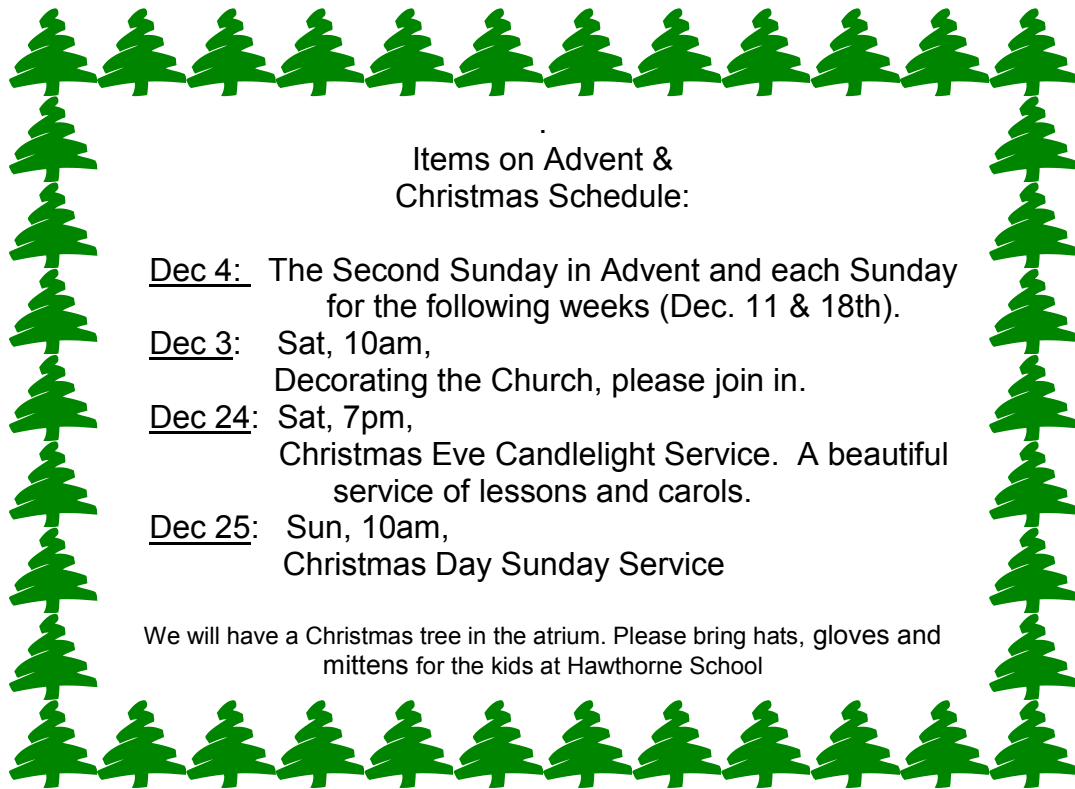
4) Where was the Garden of Eden located? ANSWER: The Bible says:

[A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.] (Genesis 2:10-14)

The identities of the rivers named Gihon and Pishon are unknown. The headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates, however, can be found in modern Iraq. Of course, that does not mean that you will find the primeval garden if you travel there. According to the New Testament, the primeval world was completely destroyed by the cataclysmic Great Flood associated with Noah. (2 Peter 3:6). By implication, the headwaters of the modern Tigris and Euphrates may be nowhere near their antediluvian sources. Moreover, it would seem that the entire Garden of Eden was also erased by the Flood.

5) Where will you find the phrase "Be still, and know that I am God?"

ANSWER: This is taken from Psalm 46:10. The Hebrew word "rapha", translated as "be still", actually means "cause yourselves to let go/become weak/surrender". There is no hope of knowing Who God really is until we give up our concerns and our pride. Before we can understand that God is the Master of the Cosmos, we have to surrender the fantasy that we are the center of reality.



Items on Advent & Christmas Schedule:

- Dec 4: The Second Sunday in Advent and each Sunday for the following weeks (Dec. 11 & 18th).
- Dec 3: Sat, 10am, Decorating the Church, please join in.
- Dec 24: Sat, 7pm, Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. A beautiful service of lessons and carols.
- Dec 25: Sun, 10am, Christmas Day Sunday Service

We will have a Christmas tree in the atrium. Please bring hats, gloves and mittens for the kids at Hawthorne School

**Potluck Dinner
with our Missionaries!
December 12, 2011 at 6:00pm**

COME and WELCOME

Dr. Elizabeth and Rev. Douglas SEARLES, internationally missionaries since 1997 in India, China and Central Europe. From their home in Lodz, Poland, they walk with Kosciol Ewangelicko-Reformowany, the Evangelical-Reformed Church of Poland (ERCP), a minority and marginalized church that works with Roma families, formally known as "Gypsies". With pictures, music, video, and personal witness, the Searles share the Good News of their ministry of accompaniment in Poland, and also share news of the critical need of the Roma people .



Candlelight Lessons & Carols

Chrissie Goldstein presents:
Saturday, Dec 3rd at 7:00pm;
The annual Candlelight Lessons and Carols concert will benefit the food drive for Hawthorne Elementary School. Please come and bring friends and family, plus packaged or easy to prepaid meals items for the children.

Thank you God for giving us Jesus
And the season for celebrating Jesus' Birth and for giving to others.

Be with us all and continue to keep us all in your loving hands.

Special prayers to those whose prayers are silent and heard only by you.

Prayers for healing and comfort:
Christine Schindler & Tana Alters
Ray Barber
Arbie - (Violet & Pastor Steve's sister-in-law

All who are suffering
In Jesus' Name
Care Team

CHRISTMAS FUND

We will be asking for donations for the Christmas Fund which assists retired clergy. You may make a donation by writing a check to the church and adding the notation "CHRISTMAS FUND".

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE
December 24th at 7pm

Please join us for the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on Dec. 24th.

Another event is being held at the church at the same time, therefore, please consider car pooling or allowing extra time to find parking.

SING FOR THEIR SUPPER!!!

Chrissie Goldstein also presents:
Saturday, Dec 10th at 7:00pm
"Grace Notes"
a benefit Christmas concert
For the Dinner Bell program.
Von Flake will be a special guest star.

Potluck with a Purpose
For the months of November and December potluck has been
CANCELLED
due to the holiday season

NEWS FROM YOUR MODERATOR



Now that the holidays are upon us, we need to take a few moments and think of how different our lives would be if it were not for the birth of Christ.

I think our world would be in worse condition than it is now, and we would not know about the magnificent love God has for each of us.

As we go about our holiday shopping, lets remember those who are less fortunate than we. If your out at the mall, take a name off the large Christmas tree and buy a present for someone you don't know. You can purchase some new toys for the toy drive or buy some new hats, gloves or scarves for our church holiday tree, located in the garden room for the Hawthorne School Children which receive the backpacks of food for the weekends.

We also would like to continue receiving food for these children, after the holidays.

Gods love works through all of us. So let's show this love to others by helping out in what ever way we can. Spread the meaning of Christmas to those who feel they have nothing left in their lives.

Gods gift of Jesus is the best gift anyone can ever receive! His love for us is all around us. It is in everything we see and do.

Have a Very Merry Christmas!

See you in church.

Joan Willits, Moderator

Trustees Report

November has been another busy month for the trustees. Cliff cleared debris from one of the outside lights on the stairs so that people entering or leaving that way at night may now see their way. Rick replaced all of the fluorescent lights in the basement which needed replacing. We welcome our newest Trustee, Tana Alters, to our team.

There are many AA groups who meet in our facility now. In fact, on Wednesday and Thursday nights practically every room in the building is full. So please be aware of this if you need to stop by as parking will be at a premium. Petr Palamarchuk, our faithful custodian, has donated his folding chairs, which were downstairs, to a different church so we are in need of more; if you happen to locate some in your wanderings please let Von know.

A heads up for December: the Narcotics Anonymous event "Hope for the Holidays" will be using nearly every room of our facility on December 24 (Christmas Eve) and 25 (Christmas morning) so coffee hour will be held in the Parlor on Christmas.

A sign has been created at the top of the stairs which, in theory, informs people of whether or not there is a group downstairs so we do not set the alarm unless the building is completely empty. There were several incidents of people either forgetting to arm the system, forgetting their codes, forgetting to disarm the system, or forgetting to check to see if there were still people downstairs before setting it. We are only allowed so many times for the police to come out before the person responsible for them arriving will be billed. If you have concerns or questions please call Von, (425)359-4417.

During a Narcotics Anonymous fundraising event on November 12, a part of the stained glass which was broken became dislodged. Cliff has met with our insurance adjustor as well as with a stained glass worker to see about the feasibility of getting some, if not all, of the stained glass repaired. Not sure why we didn't do this sooner?

Thank you for letting me be of service.
Von Flake

STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE

Too Good To Be True Giving

*“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn will break upon us.”
Luke 1:78*

These words come from the amazing poem known as the Benedictus, the blessing of Zechariah on his surprising gift-son, John (the Baptist). Zechariah is one of those minor characters in the birth narratives of Jesus, often lost in the shuffle of shepherds and magi that populate our Christmas pageants. Yet Zechariah gives us a great gift for Advent: the gift of the skeptic.

When an angel told Zechariah that his middle-aged wife Elizabeth would have a baby, he didn't believe it. All his life this man had been faithfully serving God; clearly he was a sincere believer. He held onto his faith through the years of their infertility and who knows how many other problems in their lives. But when an angel promises something “too good to be true,” the skeptic in Zechariah comes out and he rejects the God he has relied on when things have been truly bad.

This Christmas let us be about giving to the world in ways that are too good to be true. Let the skeptics see that love is more powerful than anyone expects it to be. Let us, in the image of God, give of ourselves in life-transforming ways beyond presents under the tree, just like Zechariah and Elizabeth and John. Nothing about God is ever too good to be true! Merry Christmas.

*Rochelle A. Stackhouse is the Senior Minister of The Church of the Redeemer,
United Church of Christ, New Haven Connecticut.
December 2011*

God is still speaking,



This resource is a free service and is made possible by your gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission

Upcoming Sermons November 6 – 27, 2011

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|-------------|--|
| 4 December | POSSIBILITATING PEACE (Second Sunday in Advent)
Communion Sunday
Isaiah 35:1-10
Luke 1:26-38 |
| 11 December | CAUGHT BY LOVE (Third Sunday in Advent)
1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Luke 5:1-11 |
| 18 December | GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY (Fourth Sunday in Advent)
Isaiah 40:1-5
Isaiah 52:7-10
Luke 2:1-20 |
| 25 December | CHRISTMAS CAROLS SUNG BY THE CONGREGATION |

“Planning Ahead” Calendar

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|---------|---|
| Dec — | Chancel Choir,
(every Monday at 6:30pm)
EUCC Crafter's Circle (every Tuesday at 7:00pm) |
| Dec 3— | Christmas Tree Decorating, 10:00am |
| Dec 4— | Deacons Meeting, 11:45am—P |
| Dec 6— | ERC Celebration, 5:00pm—BFH |
| Dec 8— | GLBT, 7:00pm—L |
| Dec 11— | Auction Meeting, 11:30am—L |
| Dec 12— | Meet & Greet Potluck Dinner for Missionaries
Liz & Doug Searles, 6:00pm—FH |
| Dec 14— | Council Meeting, 6:30pm—L |
| Dec 15— | GLBT, 7:00pm—L |
| Dec 19— | NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE |
| Dec 24— | Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 7:00pm—S |
| Dec 25— | Christmas Worship Service— Christmas Carols Sung by
the Congregation , 10:00am—S |



DEACON'S REPORT

Sunday November 27th, was our first Sunday in Advent. It was great to see new banners up in the sanctuary, poinsettias on the alter, and our first Advent candle being lit by Lan and Dwayne. Please plan to join us Sundays in Advent to hear Pastor Steve's wonderful sermons, beautiful music from Chrissie and the choir, and simply to join in worship and fellowship. Of course Oscar and Tootsie will be present as well and we all have carols to sing.

Saturday December 24th the Christmas Eve service is at 7:00 pm.

Another function is going on in the church building on the 24th, so please plan to car pool or get to the church early to find parking.

Our regular Sunday service is December 25th at 10:00 am.

Advent is a time of expectation and reflection. As we reflect, the tips below may be helpful reminders. The following was taken from the UCC website.

Thank you and Merry Christmas! *Betty Fisher, Chair of the Board of Deacons*

10 Life lessons learned from packing a suitcase Written by Rod Mundy

- 1. Pack lightly – the less you have, the less you must carry.**
Don't carry around those hurts and pains; they only lead to frustration and anger. Too much of anything can only lead to problems.
- 2. When your suitcase needs some TLC, get out the duct tape.**
If you can't keep it together alone, there is always someone there to stick with you.
- 3. If at first you don't succeed to get it all in there – re-pack.**
Whatever it is, you can almost always do it over the next day.
- 4. Don't pack what isn't yours.**
It just makes the bag too heavy to carry. Odds are you will only be carrying someone else's junk.
- 5. Roll, don't fold. You can fit more in the suitcase that way.**
Try a different approach to things and you might find more hours in the day and more space to get things done. Fewer wrinkles, too.
- 6. If you pack all wrong and everything wrinkles...**
...not to worry. A few wrinkles never hurt anyone. Just ask your grandparents; wrinkles add character.
- 7. Pack so it doesn't leak. You don't want to get where you're going and realize you're all wet.**
Take time to put those nasty thoughts in a bag and seal them up so they don't leak out.
- 8. If the wheels no longer work, just drag it.**
Some days you just have to pull yourself along, realizing that life is a journey and the road can get bumpy. There was life before wheels on luggage.
- 9. When your handle breaks, God will be there to carry life's load with you.**
You are not on life's journey alone.
- 10. Remember that Jesus is the ultimate packing consultant.**
As Jesus says, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." Let God help you through your day.

The Christmas Fund: 2011

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund is the primary source of annual income for the work of the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, one of the corporations comprising the Pension Boards of the United Church of Christ.

You can honor the Christ Child during this season by bringing gifts that will be used to support and honor those who have served, and are serving, this beloved church. Your gifts will truly represent the incarnation nature of the church at its best.

Gifts to the Christmas Fund help provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retirees, emergency assistance to the families of clergy and lay employees, and Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks to hundreds of annuitants.

The Christmas Fund provides a lifeline of hope to many lower-income active and retired clergy and lay employees in the United Church of Christ. Due to the lingering effects of the economic recession, there have been many instances in which gifts from the Christmas Fund have made a critical difference in the lives of people living literally on the edge.

The United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance and the staff of the Pension Boards are confident that, through your continuing faithfulness, we will be able to provide the same level of care and compassion as has been our tradition for more than a century.

SOMETHING NEW

Everett UCC Crafters' Circle
Tuesday night, starting December 6, 2011 at 7pm until
9pm in the Church Library.
Contact Katt Daida 425-672-7571
for more information.