



# CROSS CONNECTION

The Newsletter of Cottage Grove United Church of Christ  
Published Monthly  
December 1, 2011



## 150 Years and Going Strong



*No matter who you are  
or where you are  
on life's journey,  
you'll find a home here!*



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United Church of Christ**  
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## Christmas Ideas That Spread Cheer Among our Neighbors

This year Americans can give the gift of genuine concern for other Americans. Here's some gift ideas that are produced by American hands.

- ☆ Everyone gets their hair cut. How about gift certificates from your local hair salon or barber?
- ☆ Gym membership? It's appropriate for all ages who are thinking about some health improvement.
- ☆ Who wouldn't appreciate getting their car detailed? Small, American owned detail shops and car washes would love to sell you a gift certificate or a book of gift certificates.
- ☆ There are a bazillion owner-run restaurants -- all offering gift certificates. And, if your intended isn't the fancy eatery sort, what about a half dozen breakfasts at the local breakfast joint?
- ☆ How many people couldn't use an oil change for their car, truck or motorcycle, done at a shop run by the American working guy?
- ☆ Thinking about a heartfelt gift for mom? Mom would LOVE the services of a local cleaning lady for a day.
- ☆ My computer could use a tune-up, and I KNOW I can find some young guy who is struggling to get his repair business up and running.
- ☆ Looking for something more personal? Local crafts people spin their own wool and knit them into scarves. They make jewelry, and pottery and beautiful wooden boxes.
- ☆ Plan your holiday outings at local, owner operated restaurants and leave your server a nice tip. And, how about going out to see a play or ballet at your hometown theatre?
- ☆ Musicians need love too, so find a venue showcasing local bands.
- ☆ Hard to think of something for men? Perhaps that grateful gift receiver would like his driveway sealed, or lawn mowed for the summer, or driveway plowed all winter, or games at the local golf course.
- ☆ This is about supporting your home town Americans with their financial lives on the line to keep their doors open.
- ☆ Christmas this year is about encouraging American small businesses to keep plugging away to follow their dreams. And, when we care about other Americans, we care about our communities, and the benefits come back to us in ways we couldn't imagine. THIS is the new American Christmas tradition.

*Focus on Christ  
this Season*



## Rev. Nancy Swanson, Interim Pastor

Office Hours

Tuesday—Friday

If you would like to get on Pastor Nancy's calendar, call Jenn

Office Phone: (651) 459-1501

Pastor Nancy's e-mail:  
thepastor@usfamily.net

Prayer Needs



### PRAY! PRAY! PRAY!

Daniel Bies - Rob Biscoe - Isabel Board - Beth Davies - Jim Gregory - Ruby Hanson - Sandy Rabe - Red Spicer - Jean Stoker

Sue Bowman (friend of Jim and Jean Stoker) - Tami Christian-son (daughter of Russ and Kathy Trout) - Christopherson family (Elaine Mitchell's friends) - Brady Heschke - JR (John Greenwell's friend) - Liz (Marilyn Heschke's niece) - Stacy Hillman (Nancy and Wes Hillman's daughter-in-law) - Bernice Husting (Karen Spicer's mom) - Donna Johnson (Gary Afdahl's mother-in-law) - Denise Heschke Krech (Marilyn Heschke's daughter) - family of Cheryl Kottke - Cathy Lista (George Ronn's sister) - Margie Madison (FM vendor) - Dennis Wolf - Midge Youngquist's grandmother - Sue

**To Add:** If you have friends or loved ones you would like added to the prayer list, fill out one of the yellow prayer cards in the attendance book and put in the offering basket.

**To Remove:** If you have friends or loved ones who are doing well and can be removed from the church prayer list, please contact the church office.



## Thoughts of a "Between Times" Pastor...



Our 21st century American celebration of Christmas continues to show signs of anxiety, influenced by the economy, technology, and the political atmosphere around us. There are ups and downs every day in the market that signal continued uncertainty around jobs and our economic future(s) – but consumer spending is up. Excitement (and upset) about around Black Friday store hours – but who can resist? Anticipation around the service members returning home from Iraq continues to grow. A “war of words” over healthcare, taxes and benefits, and political candidates continues unabated.

So here's the dilemma; just where does Christmas come into the picture for you? Where does the hope for good in the world, the real peace of God we claim, the joy of our faith, and the love we know and show fit in - especially when we confront the anxious atmosphere that pervades this Christmas season?

Yet that's what Christmas is. If there is anything the shepherds and wise-men did it was communicate the message of good news they had received - that God was nearby and accessible to each and every one of us, to give us hope. That God came in peace and love to us. That's what we want our family and friends, our kids, our communities, our world to realize and take in for themselves! The hope, peace, joy, and love of God in Christ that can go beyond the uncertainty of life to solid ground in God's mercy and grace.

May I suggest some things you can do, this year, to remind yourself and others of the true meaning of Christmas?

Choose to be still and tune yourself to the quiet wonder of the season.



Take a moment and read the Christmas story, perhaps to a child. Set aside an hour to watch it snow outside, enjoy the light of a candle, or take a walk in the cold stillness of an evening. Listen for the angels!

Make or buy an Advent wreath (the kind with candles on it) and take time each week of December to light the candles. Sing or hum a carol and say a simple prayer. (If I can be of help to you in some way to create that, just let me know.)

Put up clear Christmas symbols (a star to guide you, a candle for “Jesus, the Light of the World”) as well as wreaths, mistletoe, lights, and a tree.

When you hear a true Christmas carol (“Away in a Manger”, “The First Nowell”, even “The Little Drummer Boy”) remind yourself and others that “this is one of OUR songs” and sing along.

Sit down at some point on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day and read the Christmas story. You will find Mary, Joseph and the shepherds in Luke 2 and the three kings in Matthew 2.

Consider this: someone said to me one year “You know, I decided that if three gifts were enough for Jesus, it's enough for anyone on my list”. Think about how that might impact your giving - and about those for whom just one gift might be everything.



Doing just a couple of these things will probably contribute to a more joyful and meaningful Christmas for you - and for others around you too. Peace to you in these days of a greater recognition of God's presence among us, a presence known as Jesus, the one we really celebrate at Christmas.

Blessings, Pastor Nancy



## MONEY MATTERS...

### Scrip

We made \$598.67 in November.

### Scrip—Holiday Schedule

If you are needing gift cards for Christmas, please get your order in **EARLY!!!** I will be putting in orders on the following Mondays and before 9am to help with turnaround time. If you need them before a Sunday, please indicate that and I can call you when they come in.

Order	Available for Pickup (guesses)
12/5	12/18 (may be in earlier) - last order that I will "guarantee" for Christmas availability
12/12	12/21 (hopefully)
12/19	12/29?
12/27	01/08?



### Offertory Envelopes

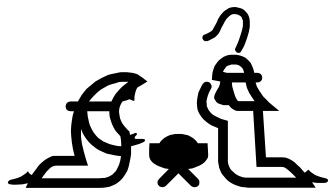
Jenn will be ordering the offering envelopes for 2012. If you have not received envelopes in the past and would like to have some this year, please let me know asap! If you have received envelopes, nothing will change unless you let me know. Thank You!



### The United Church of Christ Christmas Fund offering

We will be participating in the United Church of Christ Christmas Fund special offering on Sunday, December 18th. You can honor and support those church professionals – the lay workers, clergy, and disabled clergy – who have served the Church over the years, spreading the news of God's wonderful Christmas gift of Jesus Christ.

Gifts to the UCC 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. Due to the small pension of some clergy who served small churches and 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. Thank you for your gift of compassion.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

## Cross Connection

A Periodical Newsletter of  
**Cottage Grove United Church  
of Christ**

Published on the 1<sup>st</sup>  
of every month

Deadline is the 25<sup>th</sup> of every  
month

**Back issues available on our  
Church web site at  
[www.cgucc.org](http://www.cgucc.org)**

Submit articles via e-mail at  
[cgucc@usfamily.net](mailto:cgucc@usfamily.net) or drop  
them off at the office.

Jenn

## Contact Us

### Cottage Grove United Church of Christ

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Cottage Grove MN 55016  
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**Rev. Nancy Swanson**  
"Pastor Nancy"

Interim Pastor  
[thepastor@usfamily.net](mailto:thepastor@usfamily.net)

**Gary Afdahl**  
Director of Music

**Jenn Lanz**  
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[cgucc@usfamily.net](mailto:cgucc@usfamily.net)

**Sheri Wohlers**  
Custodian  
[sherileewohlers@gmail.com](mailto:sherileewohlers@gmail.com)

**Ken Huber**  
Church President



## Fall Roadside Cleanup

On October 30th, members of the 9th Grade Confirmation class along with members of the church and Pastor Nancy participated in the fall roadside cleanup.

Back Row: Chase Wilkinson, Amy Howard, Bruce Fiedler, Lucas Fiedler, Pastor Nancy Swanson, Ken Huber

Second Row: Kayla Howard, Karly Howard, Barb Larson

Front Row: Carma Wilkinson, Stephanie Miller, Jenna Ertman, Deb Hanson

## Larsen Films Fundraiser for CGUCC - Get your Photo Montages for a special holiday gift

Price: \$75.00 CGUCC gets 30%!!!

You submit 60-70 photos of your choice and music of your choice. You receive 2 DVD's with your photo montage! plus, any photos we scan in, we'll give you those on a separate CD too! You can purchase this special DVD photo montage by January 31, 2012 but have the option to use it through all of 2012 so it is like a gift certificate type situation if you don't choose to use it right away! If you want this for a holiday gift, if you submit your photos/music to us by Dec. 15th, we'll guarantee these to you by Dec. 23rd! Contact Bill or Traci Larsen to purchase! feel free to review our website: [www.larsenfilms.com](http://www.larsenfilms.com)



## Chrysalis

Handcrafted gifts, Massages & More

110 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave Hastings MN 55033

-- next to Tavern on Main

651-319-0584

12 local artists & designers, including Lori Fiedler

Grand opening 1st weekend in December.

## Women's Fellowship Recipe Collection

Women's Fellowship is collecting the best recipes from our church members, family, and friends and compiling them into a keepsake cookbook. This cookbook will contain well-loved, tried and true recipes including appetizers, main dishes, desserts and many others. We would love to collect your favorite recipes. This week we are especially looking for recipes from the **vegetables and side dishes category**, but all other recipes are welcome. Please use the recipe collection sheet (<http://www.morriscookbooks.com/dc/tns10/RecipeCollection.pdf>) to write your recipe down. Feel free to make multiple copies of the sheet if you have several recipes you'd like to share. Additional recipe collection sheets can also be picked up in the Gathering Room. Recipes can be dropped off in the recipe collection box in the Gathering Room, or mailed to the church, attn. Women's Fellowship. For more information contact Sheri Wohlers 651-731-2717.



## Births

- \* Congratulations to Rev. Désirée Gold (formerly pastor of UCC Cottage Grove) and her husband Ben as they welcome their new daughter, Lenora June Emilie Gold into the world. Lenora was born on October 19, weighing 6 lbs, 12.8 oz. Both Lenora and Désirée are doing well.
- \* Son Noah Richard Rasmussen was born to Amber and Derek Rasmussen on November 15, 2011 at Woodwinds Hospital. 7 lbs, 6 oz.
- \* Daughter Madelyn Roxanne Schneider born on November 10, 2011 at Woodwinds Hospital 7 lbs, 5.6 oz, Parents are Kurt and Alison Schneider, grandmother Roxanne White, great-grandmother is Jean Gausman.



## Food Shelf Volunteers Needed

The Friends in Need Food Shelf in St. Paul Park is in need of volunteers. Please call 651-458-1787 and leave a message for Michelle if interested.



## NEWS...

### Women's Fellowship

11/27 - Sock & Mitten Tree will be put up (Bev Gross)

12/8 - Annual Christmas Party (Elaine Mitchell)

January - Yarn drive for the Marvelous Mitten Makers (Elaine Mitchell)

1/22 & 1/29 - Book Sale (Sheri Wohlers)

2/12 - Valentines Bake Sale (Women's Fellowship)

The next meeting for Women's Fellowship will be on 2/16/12 at 6:30 pm. It will be a potluck.

The Great Room Christmas tree for the mittens, socks, and caps is up. Please decorate the tree generously for people who are not so fortunate. Thank You for the spirit of Christmas giving. Sponsored by Women's Fellowship.



### Service Group A Leaders Needed

Two new leaders are needed for Service Group A. The service group is used mostly for funerals. If you are a working person, that's ok. We need some people to do the calling and organize the funeral meals. To be a leader you do not have to come from Service Group A. For more information on what to do, please contact Bev Gross or Sheri Wohlers. It is a very rewarding job.

### Notes of Thanks...

#### ♥ Operation Christmas Child

I want to Thank You all for a Very Successful Shoebox Drive. Being the first time the church has done this, I delivered 31 boxes to Woodbury Lutheran Church on Sunday Nov 20th. I found out that the boxes we donated will be going to India and/or Zambia, Africa. Operation Christmas Child will be something we will do again in the coming years, with more lead time. If you have ideas on how we can make this a more unified church project let me know. ~Bruce Fiedler



- ♥ "Thank you so much for the 130 lbs of food. We really appreciate your support!" ~Friends in Need food shelf
- ♥ Many thanks go to Lyle Biscoe for the use of his big lawn mower this summer, and thanks to Jerry Biscoe who did a great job of mowing with it. Jerry spent a lot of time grooming the yard. ~Bev Gross
- ♥ John Perkins has spent many hours the past two weeks working on the church speakers rewiring them and replacing them in new places of the church. It will make a difference in the sound of our JC Rock. John also spent hours working in the driveway with cement so the snow plows can have a smoother time plowing. And if you would have gone by the church and seen him painting on the driveway, he was really striping it, wow! We really appreciate your hard work! ~Bev Gross

## Member Helping Member Directory

The listings below offer you the opportunity to call a church member when you are looking for a business. Give them a try.

**Karen Fritze, Cake Cottage**, cakes for weddings or special occasions, (651) 459-4460, [www.cakestands.com](http://www.cakestands.com)

**Ken Huber, Home Building Services Inc.**, architectural design, plans for new homes, additions, remodeling, kitchens and bathrooms, (651)459-7545, [homebuildings@aol.com](mailto:homebuildings@aol.com)

**Bill Larsen, Larsen Films**, video production of events, photo montages, and other video services, (651) 270-2730, [www.larsenfilms.com](http://www.larsenfilms.com)

**Jerry Perkins, JBPerkins Architect**, architectural services for commercial, retail, medical, and restaurant buildings, (651)436-6966, [jbperk@usfamily.net](mailto:jbperk@usfamily.net)

**Ramona Westerberg, The Healing Place**, massage for facilitating health naturally, pain management, and pain relief, (651) 206-7141, or [www.thehealingplacecg.com](http://www.thehealingplacecg.com)

**Wayne Westerberg, Four Seasons Outdoor Services**, tree removal, stump removal, trimming, snow removal and lawn maintenance, (651) 768-0833

**Erik, R & H Remodeling**, Concrete/sidewalks, driveways, waterproofing, retaining walls, landscaping, and tree service (651) 757-0440

**Charlie Eberspacher, E.C.E. Plumbing**, (651)746-9698

If you would like to list your business, please call the church office, (651) 459-1501.



12/01 Fries, Joyce  
 12/02 McCoy, Chris  
 12/02 Utsch, Dave  
 12/03 Bonngard, Yvonne  
 12/03 Anderson, John  
 12/04 Bothun, Donna  
 12/05 Hanson, Kylie  
 12/06 Janicek, Bobbi Jo  
 12/07 Marty, Dale  
 12/09 Hanson, Melissa  
 12/10 Morgan, Jim  
 12/10 Dahlke, Sandra  
 12/10 Anderson, Jessica  
 12/11 Schmidt, Daniel  
 12/13 Bender, Bradley  
 12/15 Youngquist, Allyson  
 12/19 Howard, Rob  
 12/23 Spicer, Emily  
 12/23 Wilkinson, Chase  
 12/24 Mathison, Gloria  
 12/25 White, Roxanne  
 12/25 Ryan, Richard[V]  
 12/26 McCoy, Kate  
 12/27 Stoker, Jim  
 12/27 Biscoe, Kathryn  
 12/27 Longtine, Jessica  
 12/28 Kropelnicki, Kyle  
 12/29 Vink, Bonnie  
 12/30 Spicer, Warren  
 12/30 Sutter, Leah

**Needing to plan something?**  
 The most up to date version of the calendar is available on our website!  
<http://www.cgucc.org/>

## DECEMBER 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 1st Sunday of Advent Decorating church for Christmas Mittens/Socks/Caps Tree 8:45 AM Adult Bible Study 9:00 AM NOI Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship 11:15 AM Fellowship	28 Pastor's Day Off 7:00 PM Finance Team Meeting	29	30 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal	1 7:00 PM Boy Scouts 7:00 PM Women's Ecumenical Christmas Service at Newport United Methodist	2	3
4 2nd Sunday of Advent Mittens/Socks/Caps Tree 8:45 AM Adult Bible Study 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship with Communion 11:15 AM Fellowship 11:30 AM Transition Team Meeting	5 Pastor's Day Off 6:00 PM Cub Scouts-Lions 7:00 PM Boy Scouts	6 7:00 PM Church Council	7 10:00 AM Gratitude Group - Christmas Party 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal	8 6:30 PM Women's Fellowship Christmas Party 7:00 PM Boy Scouts	9 6:30 PM Boy Scout Lock in	10 Boy Scout Lock in
11 3rd Sunday of Advent Mittens/Socks/Caps Tree 8:45 AM Adult Bible Study 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship with Vibeek Baptism 11:15 AM Fellowship 1:00 PM Confirmation Session and Christmas Party	12 Pastor's Day Off 7:00 PM Annual Meeting	13	14 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal	15 7:00 PM Boy Scouts	16	17
18 4th Sunday of Advent Christmas Fund Special Offering Mittens/Socks/Caps Tree 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship with Sunday School Christmas Pageant 11:15 AM Fellowship 1:00 PM Huber Christmas Party	19 Pastor's Day Off 6:00 PM Cub Scouts-Lions	20 6:30 PM Cub Scouts	21 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal	22 7:00 PM Boy Scouts	23	24 4:00 PM Christmas Eve Worship Service 10:00 PM Christmas Eve Worship Service
25 Mittens/Socks/Caps Tree 9:00 AM Cross Connection Articles/Announcements due to Jenn 11:00 AM Worship 11:45 AM Fellowship	26 Office Closed Pastor's Day Off	27	28 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Cub Scouts Committee Mtg	29 7:00 PM Boy Scouts	30	31 New Year's Eve

## What's Going On at CGUCC for the week?!?

If you have not been receiving the weekly email listing the events for the week and any big upcoming events and would like to, please send Jenn an email at [cgucc@usfamily.net](mailto:cgucc@usfamily.net).

## UPCOMING EVENTS...

### Annual Meeting

Church Council has announced that the Annual Meeting of Cottage Grove United Church of Christ will be held on Monday, December 12, 2011 at 7:00 pm. Please mark your calendars and plan on attending.



### Annual Women's Christmas Dinner

The Annual Christmas dinner for all the church women will take place in the Great Room on December 8<sup>th</sup> with Social hour at 6:30 pm and Dinner at 7:00 pm.



Price for this great meal will be just \$10.00 per person, payable at the dinner. Make your check out to Women's Fellowship. Reservations are required and must be made by **Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>**. There is a sign-up sheet in the Gathering Room or call Elaine at 651-459-6298. Please indicate your choice of entrée. (Chicken Breast, Baked Salmon, or Roast Pork Loin) Please bring a small wrapped Christmas gift to exchange.

### Men's Breakfast

All men of the church are invited to join Pastor Nancy Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 8:30am for breakfast. We will meet at Perkins in Cottage Grove. We will discuss future get togethers as well as our Christmas gift giving strategies.

### Sunday School

#### "I Don't Believe It!" Pageant Practices:

Sunday December 4 – during Sunday school  
 Sunday December 11 – during Sunday school  
 Saturday December 17 – 9am – 11am  
 Sunday December 18 – during Sunday school

#### Pageant:

Sunday December 18 – during service of worship

### Events

We are in a very busy season for all of us. With this being mine and Pastor Nancy's first holiday season with CGUCC we don't want to miss any events or traditions. So as I said at the beginning, there's a good chance that if you don't tell me, I don't know it's happening!



## UPCOMING EVENTS in the Community...

### Christmas Train

The Canadian Pacific Holiday Train is hitting the rails to raise food, money, and awareness for local food shelves.

The Holiday Train arrival is a great community kick-off to the Holiday Season. It will be stopping at Cottage Grove Sunday, December 11, 2011 from 5:30-6:30 pm.

The Friends in Need Food Shelf needs your help as they are serving more people than ever before. Currently 180-200 families visit the food shelf every week! They have a goal to raise \$60,000 this year.



**Always check the church Bulletin board  
 for added events in the Community!**

## Coming Up in Worship

### Sunday, December 4

*2nd Sunday of Advent*

8:45 am Adult Bible Study  
 9:00 am Sunday School  
 10:15 am Worship with Communion  
 11:15 am Fellowship

### Sunday, December 11

*3rd Sunday of Advent*

8:45 am Adult Bible Study—  
 "Preparation for Christmas"  
 9:00 am Sunday School  
 10:15 am Worship with Baptism  
 11:15 am Fellowship

### Sunday, December 18

*4th Sunday of Advent*

9:00 am Sunday School  
 10:15 am Worship with Sunday School Christmas Pageant  
 11:15 am Fellowship

### Saturday, December 24

*Christmas Eve*

4:00 pm Worship  
 10:00 pm Worship



### Sunday, December 25

*Christmas Day*

11:00 am Worship  
 11:45 am Fellowship

**CHRISTMAS  
 WORSHIP  
 SCHEDULE**

### Sunday, January 1

*New Year's Day*

11:00 am Worship  
 11:45 am Fellowship

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Participating in Worship in December**

Head Usher—Bob Janicek  
 Altar Team—Jan Huber  
 Communion Preparation—  
 Midge Youngquist & Mike  
 Roberts

### **Participating in Worship in January**

Head Usher—?  
 Altar Team—open  
 Communion Preparation—?

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7008 Lamar Avenue South  
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Email: [cgucc@usfamily.net](mailto:cgucc@usfamily.net)

**STOP!!**  
If you are able to receive this newsletter via email or no longer wish to receive it, please let Jenn know. Thanks!



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## Have you bought your Celebration Garden Stone yet?!?

\$100 per Stone - 8 1/2 x 17"

You are allowed 3 lines with 13 characters per line

Forms are available on our website or at the church.

**80 purchased so far and counting!**

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## How can we take better care of the earth?

By recycling and reusing and keeping things out of the landfill that someone else could use. Here are three ways you can help.



1. We're having a used book sale in January. Everyone is invited to save their gently used books and donate them to the church used book sale.
2. Also coming in January and continuing through Earth Day, April 22 is a used tennis shoe collection. Used tennis shoes in any condition will be collected and sent to third world countries and disaster relief areas. If the shoes are in really rough condition, the rubber can still be recycled into new rubber products.
3. There will be a spring Trash to Treasure Sale where you can donate most garage sale type items. If you are just dying to get some reusable items out of your house the church has a place where you can drop off your used items now. There is a room in the church basement, some know it as the turkey carving room. If you come down the west stairs it is the first room on the left. Before dropping off large items please check with Sheri Wohlers first. Space is limited and if large items don't sell you will be asked to take them back. No encyclopedias, computers, monitors, printers, big old tv's, mattresses, box springs, car seats, paint, drapery rods, large appliances. For questions or more information contact Sheri Wohlers 651-731-2717.

***"Treat the earth well: it was not given to you by your parents, it was loaned to you by your children. We do not inherit the Earth from our Ancestors, we borrow it from our Children."***

Ancient Indian Proverb