



BEYOND THE BROADCAST

A chronological listing for
Spirit Connection programs, 18th, 19th, and 20th seasons

September 2005–December 2007

CONTENTS

<i>Spirit Connection Programs—18th Season: 2005/2006</i>	6
September 2005	6
September 4, Dare to Change Part 1: Changing Demographics and the Church	6
September 11, Dare to Change Part 2: Changing Church Buildings	6
September 18, Arts and Spirituality	6
September 25, Listen: A Journey of Social Justice	6
October 2005	6
October 2, Accompaniment: Working in Jamaica	6
October 9, Raising Spirits: Farm Workers from Jamaica	7
October 16, Topahdewin: The Gladys Cook Story: Part 1	7
October 23, Topahdewin: The Gladys Cook Story: Part 2	7
October 30, Faith and Popular Culture	7
November 2005	7
November 6, The Power and the Grace: Canadian Servicewomen of the Second World War.....	7
November 13, Profile of Margaret Storey: 40 years in Korea.....	7
November 20, French Ministries (UMiF)	7
November 27, Listening to the Spirit—Preparing the Way	8
December 2005	8
December 4, Journey to Bethlehem.....	8
December 11, Blessed Among Women.....	8
December 18, Christmas at Metropolitan United Church	8
December 25, A Christmas Card.....	8
January 2006	8
January 1, Accompaniment: Working in Jamaica	8
January 8, Raising Spirits: Farm Workers from Jamaica	8
January 15, Topahdewin: The Gladys Cook Story: Part 1	8
January 22, Topahdewin: The Gladys Cook Story: Part 2	9
January 29, Faith and Popular Culture	9
February 2006	9
February 5, A Decade of Caring and Sharing	9
February 12, Day by Day, Step by Step	9
February 19, Waiting for a Solution.....	9
February 26, Community Ministries.....	9
March 2006	9
March 5, Faith and Popular Culture 2	9
March 12, Outreach Ministries.....	10
March 19–April 9, Caring for Waters (2006 Lenten Series)	10
March 19, Program One: Rural Vulnerability	10
March 26, Program Two: A Shining River	10
April 2006	10
April 2, Program Three: Invisible Residue	10
April 9, Program Four: One Drop at a Time.....	10
April 16, A Lighter Lens on the Church	10
April 23, A Place for All.....	10

April 30, Taking Action: Small Arms	11
May 2006	11
May 7, International Update.....	11
May 14, Faith and Popular Culture 2	11
May 21, Listening to the Spirit: Preparing the Way	11
May 28, A Decade of Caring and Sharing	11
June 2006	11
June 4, Day by Day, Step by Step	11
June 11, Issues before the 39th General Council	11
June 18, Topahdewin: The Gladys Cook Story: Part 1.....	12
June 25, Topahdewin: The Gladys Cook Story: Part 2.....	12
July 2006	12
July 2, French Ministries (UMiF).....	12
July 9, Profile of Margaret Storey: 40 years in Korea	12
July 16, Community Ministries	12
July 23, Arts & Spirituality	12
July 30, Health and Wellness	12
August 2006.....	13
August 6, Deaf Ministry	13
August 13, Issues Before 39th General Council	13
August 20, A Lighter Lens on the Church	13
August 27, McClure	13
September 2006	13
September 3–24, Caring for Waters	13
September 3, Program One: Rural Vulnerability	13
September 10, Program Two: A Shining River	13
September 17, Program Three: Invisible Residue	14
September 24, Program Four: One Drop at a Time.....	14
October 2006	14
October 1, A Place for All.....	14
October 8, Waiting for a Solution.....	14
<i>Spirit Connection Programs—19th Season: 2006/2007</i>	<i>14</i>
October 2006	14
October 15, Changing Times	14
October 22, A New Face: St. James United Church, Montreal.....	14
October 29, People of Faith Say Stop HIV and AIDS.....	15
November 2006	15
November 5, The Power and the Grace: Canadian Servicewomen of the Second World War.....	15
November 12, Affirming Congregations	15
November 19, Borderless	15
November 26, More than Just Books: United Church Resource Distribution	15
December 2006	15
December 3, Community Violence	15
December 10, Beyond Grief	16
December 17, Christmas at Metropolitan United Church	16

December 24, Christmas Carols	16
December 31, A Lighter Lens on the Church	16
January 2007	16
January 7, Changing Times	16
January 14, A New Face: St. James United Church, Montreal	16
January 21, People of Faith Say Stop HIV and AIDS	16
January 28, Affirming Congregations	17
February 2007	17
February 4, Newfound Church	17
February 11, Building a Church: The Methodists of Colombia	17
February 18, The Power Within	17
February 25, Borderless	17
March 2007	17
March 4, Men's Spirituality	17
March 11–April 8, Sharing Our “Song of Faith” (2007 Lenten Series)	18
March 11, Program One: God and Creation	18
March 18, Program Two: Brokenness, Grace, and Healing	18
March 25, Program Three: Jesus, God's Love Incarnate	18
April 2007	18
April 1, Program Four: Hope beyond Life	18
April 8, Program Five: Resurrection	18
April 15, Art and Culture	18
April 22, Men's Spirituality	19
April 29, Highly Musical	19
May 2007	19
May 6, British Columbia Conference	19
May 13, Community Violence	19
May 20, Borderless	19
May 27, More than Just Books: United Church Resource Distribution	19
June 2007	19
June 3 First Comes Love, then Comes Marriage?	19
June 10, Affirming Congregations	20
June 17, Building a Church: The Methodists of Colombia	20
June 24, Art and Culture	20
July 2007	20
July 1, British Columbia Conference	20
July 8, Beyond Grief	20
July 15, The Power Within	20
July 22, Highly Musical	21
July 29, A New Face: St. James United Church, Montreal	21
August 2007	21
August 5, People of Faith Say Stop HIV and AIDS	21
August 12–September 9, Sharing Our “Song of Faith” (2007 Lenten Series)	21
August 12, Program One: God and Creation	21
August 19, Program Two: Brokenness, Grace, and Healing	21
August 26, Program Three: Jesus, God's Love Incarnate	22
September 2007	22

September 2, Program Four: Hope beyond Life	22
September 9, Program Five: Resurrection	22
September 16, Newfound Church	22
September 30, Men's Spirituality	22
<i>Spirit Connection Programs—20th Season: 2007</i>	22
October 2007	22
October 14, Youth Leadership Circle	22
October 21, Invitation to Encounter	22
October 28, Regina Ministry and Greening of Sacred Spaces	23
November 2007	23
November 4, United for Peace	23
November 11, For the Boys	23
November 18, After the Tsunami: Rebuilding Our Villages and Our Lives	23
November 25, Building a Church: The Methodists of Colombia	23
December 2007	23
December 2, Empire.....	23
December 9, Stories from B.C.....	23
December 16, Christmas in Bethlehem	24
December 23, Music @ Metropolitan.....	24
December 30, The Finale.....	24

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Note: (R) indicates a reprise broadcast.

***Spirit Connection* Programs—18th Season: 2005/2006**

September 2005

September 4, Dare to Change Part 1: Changing Demographics and the Church

Shifts in demographics, cultural changes, and generational differences all affect how the church carries out its mission as an institution. This program looks at United Church congregations in Winnipeg, Manitoba and Richmond, British Columbia, which are finding new energy and ways to integrate these changes into their own vision and mission. Includes an interview with Anne Martin about a book for small group ministries and with Jim McKibbin, who talks about demographic trends and the church in the future. (R)

September 11, Dare to Change Part 2: Changing Church Buildings

Shifts in demographics, cultural changes and generational differences all affect how the church carries out its mission as an institution. This program looks at some thriving United Church congregations in Whitby, Brampton, and Toronto, Ontario, as well as Calgary, Alberta, which are finding new energy and ways to integrate these changes into their own vision and mission. Includes an interview with Vince Alfano of the Toronto United Church Council. Second part in a two-part series. (R)

September 18, Arts and Spirituality

Expression of spirituality comes in many forms. In this half-hour, a number of artists share their understanding of their faith and the gospel in tangible and visual ways. Among them is a young woman who explores biblical figures in her canvases, and uses her paintings to initiate conversation about the Bible with youth. And we visit a potter from the prairies, who finds a sense of peace while creating pottery for everyday use. (R)

September 25, Listen: A Journey of Social Justice

Moved by the news stories of the fishing crisis in Newfoundland and its effects, particularly on the young people there, a group of Ontario teens wanted to do something to show their solidarity. Their congregation rallied around and they raised money to travel to Newfoundland. This is the tale of their encounter with a social issue that has altered the face of a province. (R)

October 2005

October 2, Accompaniment: Working in Jamaica

Spirit Connection's 18th season opens with a visit to Jamaica and a look at the endeavours of two Canadians who work with the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. They talk passionately about their sense of call and the changing nature of mission.

October 9, Raising Spirits: Farm Workers from Jamaica

Every year, hundreds of Jamaican workers come to Canada during the planting and harvest seasons. The money they send home is vital to their families and their labour is essential to Canadian farmers. We meet some of these people and learn about the church's role in supporting them while they are away from home.

October 16, Topahdewin: The Gladys Cook Story: Part 1

Gladys Cook is a highly respected healer. Her life journey is marked by great hardships and immense courage. This two-part documentary, produced by Lisa Barry of the Anglican Church of Canada, profiles this spirit-filled woman and her extraordinary gifts.

October 23, Topahdewin: The Gladys Cook Story: Part 2

The story of this remarkable woman and her inspiring grace under pressure concludes.

October 30, Faith and Popular Culture

Themes of faith and spirituality are frequently portrayed in popular culture through print, cinema, television, and on the Internet. This program features some specific examples. We talk with the creators and those who provide a theological perspective, and offer practical advice on how congregations can use popular culture to broaden worship and education.

November 2005

November 6, The Power and the Grace: Canadian Servicewomen of the Second World War

The untold stories of the United Church women who served during wartime. Some toiled in cold damp British offices, breaking secret codes, while others worked in hospital corridors and under tarpaulins caring for dying and wounded soldiers. Sixty years later they talk, many for the first time, about their experiences. A documentary by Vancouver film maker Alison MacLean.

November 13, Profile of Margaret Storey: 40 years in Korea

Margaret Storey, United Church overseas personnel, just retired this past August after 40 years of service with The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea. Margaret has spent most of her life living and working in Korea as a teacher, nurse, and advocate for the rights of the disabled. This profile of Margaret tells the story of her work and contributions to the lives around her.

November 20, French Ministries (UMiF)

L'Église Unie du Canada est heureuse de présenter sa première émission en français (sous-titres en anglais) avec des récits de nos paroisses francophones, un retour sur nos racines acadiennes, la célébration du 50^e anniversaire de la revue *Aujourd'hui Credo*, et Pierre Goldberger qui nous parle de l'avenir des ministères en français dans l'église.

The United of Church of Canada proudly presents its first television broadcast in French (with English subtitles) with stories about United Church Francophone congregations, our reconnection with our Acadian roots, *Aujourd'hui Credo* magazine at 50, and a conversation with Pierre Goldberger about the future of French in the church.

November 27, Listening to the Spirit—Preparing the Way

Ministers and members of the church's Aboriginal congregations gather to celebrate their spiritual heritages and talk about their challenges and hopes for the future.

December 2005

December 4, Journey to Bethlehem

Spirit Connection celebrates Christmas in rural Ontario with a “Journey to Bethlehem.” This interactive pageant, complete with carol singing and a marketplace, attracts hundreds of people each year to the magical atmosphere at Five Oaks. (R)

December 11, Blessed Among Women

Mary, the mother of Jesus, is one of the strongest women in the Bible but she is also a figure in the Qur'an. *Spirit Connection* looks at the woman at the centre of the Christmas story and her place in several faith communities. (R)

December 18, Christmas at Metropolitan United Church

Join us for the joy that is Christmas in a musical celebration at Metropolitan United Church in downtown Toronto. Familiar carols performed by the seniors and youth choirs, the carillon, the Metropolitan Silver Band, and the handbell choir are a resounding and uplifting addition to the season.

December 25, A Christmas Card

The timeless story of Jesus' birth, told in familiar carols and drama, moves us to reflect on God's relationship with the world. It's retold here by a multicultural cast of all ages. It's a Christmas card to share with friends and family. (R)

January 2006

January 1, Accompaniment: Working in Jamaica

Spirit Connection presents a visit to Jamaica and a look at the endeavours of two Canadians who work with the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. They talk passionately about their sense of call and the changing nature of mission. (R)

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Gladys Cook is a highly respected healer. Her life journey is marked by great hardships and immense courage. This two-part documentary, produced by Lisa Barry of the Anglican Church of Canada, profiles this spirit-filled woman and her extraordinary gifts. (R)

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The story of this remarkable woman and her inspiring grace under pressure concludes. (R)

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February 2006

February 5, A Decade of Caring and Sharing

A rare look at a little-known but enormously effective ecumenical agency: Action by Churches Together (ACT). Based in Geneva and supported by the World Council of Churches, ACT responds immediately to crises throughout the world, whether through efforts to house and support refugees fleeing civil strife in Sudan, or by rebuilding villages after natural disasters in Nicaragua. The United Church of Canada is part of the ACT alliance.

February 12, Day by Day, Step by Step

This documentary examines some of the reconstruction efforts of local people, NGOs, and church partners in the aftermath of the tsunami devastation of December 2004. Their stories showcase the small steps and kindnesses that make up the slow process of recovery. See Appendix A for study guide.

February 19, Waiting for a Solution

For refugees in Kenya, life is very difficult. Some live in organized UN camps, while others migrate to the cities in search of jobs, although they have no rights or legal status. This program follows a group of United Church young people as they get a first-hand look at the work of the National Council of Churches in Kenya and other church agencies, working with and on behalf of refugees in their country.

February 26, Community Ministries

Community ministry is a vital part of what The United Church of Canada is all about. This is where day-to-day justice work, advocacy, and attention to specific local needs are addressed in very practical ways. Also in this show, interviews with national staff Gary Kenny, and with ecumenical chaplain Ralph Wushke. (R)

March 2006

March 5, Faith and Popular Culture 2

What are movies saying to us about life, love, good, and evil? Host Royal Orr talks with United Church leaders Bonnie Greene and Rob Oliphant, also fans of the cinema, who look at how to turn movie viewing into a moving experience. And United Church minister Neil Young discusses mysteries presented in the still-controversial book *The Da Vinci Code*.

March 12, Outreach Ministries

Across the country, United Churches support outreach work. This program highlights three projects: the Adult Day Program supported by Centenary-Queen Square in Saint John, New Brunswick, the Bissell Centre in Edmonton, Alberta, and the innovative programs at Shiloh/Sixth United in New Westminster, British Columbia. Learn about the unexpected benefits they've each brought to their congregations.

March 19–April 9, Caring for Waters (2006 Lenten Series)

Sources of drinkable water are becoming increasingly scarce throughout the world. Communities and countries are actively looking for ways to insure safe water for everyone and discourage those who want to exploit this essential resource. This series looks at efforts in Canada and Kenya to find sustainable solutions to water problems.

March 19, Program One: Rural Vulnerability

The United Church's Five Oaks Retreat and Education Centre has overcome a direct threat to their groundwater system from a nearby gravel pit, but faces ongoing challenges as urban sprawl and industrial expansion change the environment around them, creating more demand on the water system. They manage their water through diligent conservation and faith.

March 26, Program Two: A Shining River

The Annapolis River Project episode explores this habitat in Nova Scotia where fresh and salt waters meet, and highlights how United Church members are protecting their community and their environment.

April 2006

April 2, Program Three: Invisible Residue

With their key water source polluted by mining residue, an Aboriginal community in northern Ontario struggles to improve water quality. Efforts are being made to deal head on with this issue and this program looks at the work of one community to ensure safe water for everyone.

April 9, Program Four: One Drop at a Time

On this program we visit two water projects: a sand dam in southern Kenya used by the Masai herders who populate this arid region, and a rainwater collection project in a slum north of Nairobi, where 250,000 people live in huts perched precariously on the hillsides. Both are funded by church-based partners.

April 16, A Lighter Lens on the Church

Throughout the church year, we observe both solemn and reflective events, but there is a lighter side to church. In this program we profile an upbeat speaker/cartoonist who combines faith and humour. We visit with a photographer who looks at the church through a camera lens. And Royal Orr talks with two United Church clergy who share some amusing experiences.

April 23, A Place for All

When congregations change, the buildings they inhabit need to change too. In this program we look at how accessibility is not just about ramps, but is an issue of justice. A fledgling congregation spreads its wings.

April 30, Taking Action: Small Arms

A hot topic, as concern around the increase in handgun violence across the country is growing. On this program a United Church congregation works with the surrounding community to find ways to decrease youth violence. We also include an interview about Project Ploughshares' initiative to rally Canadians to find ways to reduce violence worldwide and press for government control of small arms.

May 2006

May 7, International Update

This half-hour update on overseas stories includes an interview with Allan Slater, who travelled to Iraq with Christian Peacemaker Teams; two youth stories, one from inner-city Nairobi and one a report from Mozambique on the arrivals of anti-retroviral drugs; and an update from Tanzania on the progress in help for people with HIV/AIDS.

May 14, Faith and Popular Culture 2

What are movies saying to us about life, love, good, and evil? Host Royal Orr talks with United Church leaders Bonnie Greene and Rob Oliphant, also fans of the cinema, who look at how to turn movie viewing into a moving experience. And United Church minister Neil Young discusses mysteries presented in the still-controversial book *The Da Vinci Code*. (R)

May 21, Listening to the Spirit: Preparing the Way

Ministers and members of the church's Aboriginal congregations gather to celebrate their spiritual heritages and talk about their challenges and hopes for the future. (R)

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June 2006

June 4, Day by Day, Step by Step

This documentary examines some of the reconstruction efforts of local people, NGOs, and church partners in the aftermath of the tsunami devastation of December 2004. Their stories showcase the small steps and kindnesses that make up the slow process of recovery. (R) See Appendix A for study guide.

June 11, Issues before the 39th General Council

Host Royal Orr and United Church minister Laura Lockhart highlight a number of key issues to be examined by the 39th General Council in August in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Topics to be discussed with guests include investment in Palestine, living faithfully in empire, the Emerging Spirit campaign, and isolation in ministry.

June 18, Topahdewin: The Gladys Cook Story: Part 1

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July 16, Community Ministries

Community ministry is a vital part of what The United Church of Canada is all about. This is where day-to-day justice work, advocacy, and attention to specific local needs are addressed in very practical ways. Also in this show, interviews with national staff Gary Kenny and Margaret Sumadh about the United Church special appeal for tsunami relief, and with ecumenical chaplain Ralph Wushke. (R)

July 23, Arts & Spirituality

Expression of spirituality comes in many forms. In this half-hour a number of artists share their understanding of their faith and the gospel in tangible and visual ways. Among them is a young woman who explores biblical figures in her canvases, and uses her paintings to initiate conversation about the Bible with youth. And we visit a potter from the prairies, who finds a sense of peace while creating pottery for everyday use. (R)

July 30, Health and Wellness

As part of a holistic approach to encouraging healthy communities, some churches have created wellness programs and Sunday healing services. An increasing number of congregations are hiring parish nurses. This program looks at examples of how congregations are not only nurturing spiritual health, but also contributing to the physical well-being of their members. (R)

August 2006

August 6, Deaf Ministry

In this program, the United Church looks at ways to answer the needs of the deaf and hearing-challenged members of its congregations. The program includes a profile of Helen Bickle, lay pastoral deaf minister. (R)

August 13, Issues Before 39th General Council

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August 20, A Lighter Lens on the Church

Throughout the church year, we observe both solemn and reflective events, but there is a lighter side to church. In this program we profile an upbeat speaker/cartoonist who combines faith and humour. We visit with a photographer who looks at the church through a camera lens. And Royal Orr talks with two United Church clergy who share some amusing experiences. (R)

August 27, McClure

A look at the life and work of medical missionary Dr. Robert McClure in India and China. (R)

September 2006

September 3–24, Caring for Waters

Sources of drinkable water are becoming increasingly scarce throughout the world. Communities and countries are actively looking for ways to insure safe water for everyone and discourage those who want to exploit this essential resource. This series looks at efforts in Canada and Kenya to find sustainable solutions to water problems. (R)

September 3, Program One: Rural Vulnerability

The United Church's Five Oaks Retreat and Education Centre has overcome a direct threat to their groundwater system from a nearby gravel pit, but faces ongoing challenges as urban sprawl and industrial expansion change the environment around them, creating more demand on the water system. They manage their water through diligent conservation and faith. (R)

September 10, Program Two: A Shining River

The Annapolis River Project episode explores this habitat in Nova Scotia where fresh and salt waters meet, and highlights how United Church members are protecting their community and their environment. (R)

September 17, Program Three: Invisible Residue

With their key water source polluted by mining residue, an Aboriginal community in northern Ontario struggles to improve water quality. Efforts are being made to deal head on with this issue and this program looks at the work of one community to ensure safe water for everyone. (R)

September 24, Program Four: One Drop at a Time

On this program we visit two water projects: a sand dam in southern Kenya used by the Masai herders who populate this arid region, and a rainwater collection project in a slum north of Nairobi, where 250,000 people live in huts perched precariously on the hillsides. Both are funded by church-based partners. (R)

October 2006

October 1, A Place for All

When congregations change, the buildings they inhabit need to change too. In this program we look at how accessibility is not just about ramps, but is an issue of justice. A fledgling congregation spreads its wings. (R)

October 8, Waiting for a Solution

For refugees in Kenya, life is very difficult. Some live in organized UN camps, while others migrate to the cities in search of jobs, although they have no rights or legal status. This program follows a group of United Church young people as they get a first-hand look at the work of the National Council of Churches in Kenya and other church agencies, working with and on behalf of refugees in their country. (R)

***Spirit Connection* Programs—19th Season: 2006/2007**

October 2006

October 15, Changing Times

Introducing David Giuliano, the new Moderator of The United Church of Canada, elected at the 39th General Council. The church's newly appointed General Secretary of the General Council, Nora Sanders, talks with host Royal Orr about her expectations for the near future. This program will also include highlights from the proceedings of 39th General Council, held in Thunder Bay, Ontario, in August 2006. General Council is the church's national gathering, held once every three years to discern, decide, and provide guidance for the overall direction of the church.

October 22, A New Face: St. James United Church, Montreal

For nearly 80 years St. James United Church in Montreal has been hidden from Ste-Catherine Street West by other buildings, which blocked the church from public view. In the last few years the rundown stores and offices in front of the church have been removed, revealing the now-restored and beautiful face of St. James. The re-emergence of the building mirrors the re-emergence of the congregation as “the church in the heart of the city, with the city at heart.”

October 29, People of Faith Say Stop HIV and AIDS

AIDS 2006, an international gathering held in Toronto this August, was a time for people living with HIV/AIDS, advocates, community leaders, scientists, health care providers, donors, and policy-makers to focus on the key challenges in collective efforts to provide HIV/AIDS care and treatment and to prevent new infections. Churches play a unique role in these ongoing efforts. At ecumenical meetings a week before the conference, church delegates discussed new opportunities for reaching even the most marginalized with dignity and hope. This program includes interviews with an ecumenical partner and with a United Church representative, who both talk about what this means to congregations.

November 2006

November 5, The Power and the Grace: Canadian Servicewomen of the Second World War

The untold stories of the United Church women who served during wartime. Some toiled in cold, damp British offices, breaking secret codes, while others worked in hospital corridors and under tarpaulins caring for dying and wounded soldiers. Sixty years later they talk, many for the first time, about their experiences. A documentary by Vancouver filmmaker Alison MacLean. (R)

November 12, Affirming Congregations

Creating inclusive communities and embracing diversity, regardless of sexual orientation, is vital to the life and work of Affirming congregations and ministries. Here are two stories of United Church congregations who have made the choice to be Affirming congregations. One story comes from Saint John, New Brunswick, and the other from Edmonton, Alberta. An interview about the history of the Affirming Congregation Program and its meaning follows these two stories.

November 19, Borderless

This documentary tells the stories of several undocumented workers in Canada, who are struggling against the odds to work and build a future for their families. The documentary is followed by an interview about this often invisible workforce and Canadian immigration policies. *Borderless* is directed by Gemini-nominated filmmaker Min Sook Lee.

November 26, More than Just Books: United Church Resource Distribution

The United Church Publishing House has new offerings throughout the year. This program highlights two exciting new UCPH titles: *Streams of Faith* by Lois Wilson, and *Seismic Shifts* by Christopher White. Accompany *Spirit Connection* host Royal Orr on a tour of United Church Resource Distribution's Distribution Centre and meet the people who help bring you the resources you need. And learn more about what UCRD has to offer, from worship resources to giftware.

December 2006

December 3, Community Violence

From paramilitary violence in Colombia to school shootings in Canada, the church finds itself on the front lines. This program provides an update on what churches locally and internationally are doing to respond and what is needed to help stop upheaval in communities. This program includes a story about how the church helped Montreal residents put the September 2006 Dawson College shootings into a faith context. Also included is a story from Latin America, in which a community comes to grips with the loss of their young people through paramilitary ferocity. We also include an interview about Project Ploughshares'

initiative to rally Canadians to find ways to reduce violence worldwide and to press for government control of small arms.

December 10, Beyond Grief

The journey from grief and loss to healing is a personal one, but it can also be shared, particularly when a person is part of a nurturing community of faith and friends. In 1990, Father Michael Lapsley, then a university chaplain at the height of apartheid in South Africa, received a letter bomb, which not only caused severe physical and emotional damage, but also changed the course of his life. The Rev. Jamie Holtom tells of an unimaginable loss and his courageous path to recovery.

December 17, Christmas at Metropolitan United Church

Join us for the joy that is Christmas in a musical celebration at Metropolitan United Church in downtown Toronto. Familiar carols performed by the seniors and youth choirs, the carillon, the Metropolitan Silver Band, and the handbell choir are a resounding and uplifting addition to the season. (R)

December 24, Christmas Carols

Christmas is a season rich in traditions and music that convey the spirit of the holiday season. Some of the most popular carols have been with us for generations. Tune in to *Spirit Connection* for a gift of music that will treat your senses to the joy and splendour that are Christmas. (R)

December 31, A Lighter Lens on the Church

Throughout the church year, we observe both solemn and reflective events, but there is a lighter side to church. In this program we profile an upbeat speaker/cartoonist who combines faith and humour. We visit with a photographer who looks at the church through a camera lens. And Royal Orr talks with two United Church clergy who share some amusing experiences. (R)

January 2007

January 7, Changing Times

Introducing David Giuliano, the new Moderator of The United Church of Canada, elected at the 39th General Council. The church's newly appointed General Secretary of the General Council, Nora Sanders, talks with host Royal Orr about her expectations for the near future. This program will also include highlights from the proceedings of 39th General Council, held in Thunder Bay, Ontario, in August 2006. General Council is the church's national gathering, held once every three years to discern, decide, and provide guidance for the overall direction of the church. (R)

January 14, A New Face: St. James United Church, Montreal

For nearly 80 years St. James United Church in Montreal has been hidden from Ste-Catherine Street West by other buildings, which blocked the church from public view. In the last few years the rundown stores and offices in front of the church have been removed, revealing the now-restored and beautiful face of St. James. The re-emergence of the building mirrors the re-emergence of the congregation as “the church in the heart of the city, with the city at heart.” (R)

January 21, People of Faith Say Stop HIV and AIDS

AIDS 2006, an international gathering held in Toronto this August, was a time for people living with HIV/AIDS, advocates, community leaders, scientists, health care providers, donors, and policy-makers to

focus on the key challenges in collective efforts to provide HIV/AIDS care and treatment and to prevent new infections. Churches play a unique role in these ongoing efforts. At ecumenical meetings a week before the conference, church delegates discussed new opportunities for reaching even the most marginalized with dignity and hope. This program includes interviews with an ecumenical partner and with a United Church representative, who both talk about what this means to congregations. (R)

January 28, Affirming Congregations

Creating inclusive communities and embracing diversity, regardless of sexual orientation, is vital to the life and work of Affirming congregations and ministries. Here are two stories of United Church congregations who have made the choice to be Affirming congregations. One story comes from Saint John, New Brunswick, and the other from Edmonton, Alberta. An interview about the history of the Affirming Congregation Program and its meaning follows these two stories. (R)

February 2007

February 4, Newfound Church

Church for People Who Don't Like Church; From the Web to the Pews—Emerging Spirit and Wondercafe; The Manitou Collection—Celebrating the Spirit of the People through Art.

February 11, Building a Church: The Methodists of Colombia

The Methodists of Colombia are part of a young South American church that has heard God's call to create community with the poorest and most oppressed people in society. By reaching out to the poor, the Colombian Methodist Church is attracting new members from all backgrounds who are excited by its Wesleyan vision of social grace and its practical commitment to serve "the least of these."

February 18, The Power Within

For those who believe, prayer is a powerful healing tool. Personal stories from people of various faiths attest to the positive effects of prayer on their lives. This show is adapted from the award-winning, hour-long, Anglican video program, *The Power Within: Healing Through Prayer*, which is hosted by Peter Downie, and filmed in Canada, the U.S., and the U.K.

February 25, Borderless

This documentary tells the stories of several undocumented workers in Canada, who are struggling against the odds to work and build a future for their families. The documentary is followed by an interview about this often invisible workforce and Canadian immigration policies. *Borderless* is directed by Gemini-nominated filmmaker Min Sook Lee. (R)

March 2007

March 4, Men's Spirituality

Matthew Fox in conversation; men's spirituality and reclaiming mysticism in the church; men's ministry story.

March 11–April 8, Sharing Our “Song of Faith” (2007 Lenten Series)

Each generation of The United Church of Canada has created a statement of faith that reflects the church's understanding of what it means to be God's people in their time. Our newest statement is called “A Song of Faith”; it embraces the present spirit of the church in a poetic and memorable style. In this series, guests from different faith traditions are invited to enter a conversation about portions of the “Song of Faith” along with United Church people. There are five programs in this series, including a special show for Easter Sunday focusing on the resurrection. See Appendix B for study guide.

March 11, Program One: God and Creation

The first paragraph of the document “A Song of Faith” is read and discussed with guests from the United Church as well as from the Sikh, Jewish, Islamic, and Tibetan Buddhist communities. There is some agreement about creation, mystery, and the use of feminine imagery when speaking of God. There are differing views about the Trinity and the description of God as being “Wholly Love.” A fascinating window into the faiths we share and the places where our paths diverge.

March 18, Program Two: Brokenness, Grace, and Healing

A discussion about the balance between good and evil and how our beliefs cause us to respond when questions arise. In this program, Royal Orr talks with guests from Sikh, Buddhist, Muslim, Jewish, and United Church perspectives.

March 25, Program Three: Jesus, God's Love Incarnate

Who is Jesus—as God, human, Messiah, Prophet, Spirit-being, and Shaman? Discussion of how other faiths differ from Christianity and how Christians themselves are not all of one mind, of the challenge and mystery of this belief, and of its implications on a theology of creation.

April 2007

April 1, Program Four: Hope beyond Life

What is the meaning of the concept of God making all things right with us and the rest of creation? A discussion with United Church members and representatives of other faiths about the possibility of otherworldly life, of life beyond death, and of the relationship of these beliefs to the fullness of life in the here and now.

April 8, Program Five: Resurrection

Is belief in Christ's resurrection essential? For our United Church guests, the resurrection vindicates Jesus' testimony, is a proof of his divinity, links to a theology of creation, and is a vitally important mystery. They agree that “A Song of Faith” gives superb language to the excitement of our faith.

April 15, Art and Culture

Two United Churches in Ontario and Quebec have galleries that provide spiritual inspiration. “The Manitou Collection: Celebrating the Spirit of the People” is a touring exhibition of paintings by Anishinaabe artists. Includes interviews with artists and others involved in bringing the collection to a wider audience. Interviews with three elders from Standing Buffalo, Saskatchewan, about perpetuating traditional culture in their community.

April 22, Men's Spirituality

Matthew Fox in conversation; men's spirituality and reclaiming mysticism in the church; men's ministry story. (R)

April 29, Highly Musical

More Voices—Songs from the new hymnal, and musical celebration at Trinity United Church in Kitchener. Interview with United Church musician Bruce Harding; Linnea Good and Nancy Reeves on tour with music; and stories from Adventures of the God Detectives. An interview with Sharon Beckstead about the United Church of Canada Association of Musicians (UCCAM).

May 2007

May 6, British Columbia Conference

Spirit Connection visits with British Columbia Conference president, the Rev. Janice Young. The heartache and practical side to sustaining the Camping Ministry in B.C. An update on medical missions in Bella Coola.

May 13, Community Violence

From paramilitary violence in Colombia to school shootings in Canada, the church finds itself on the front lines. This program provides an update on what churches locally and internationally are doing to respond and what is needed to help stop upheaval in communities. This program includes a story about how the church helped Montreal residents put the September 2006 Dawson College shootings into a faith context. Also included is a story from Latin America, in which a community comes to grips with the loss of their young people through paramilitary ferocity. We also include an interview about Project Ploughshares' initiative to rally Canadians to find ways to reduce violence worldwide and to press for government control of small arms. (R)

May 20, Borderless

This documentary tells the stories of several undocumented workers in Canada, who are struggling against the odds to work and build a future for their families. The documentary is followed by an interview about this often invisible workforce and Canadian immigration policies. *Borderless* is directed by Gemini-nominated filmmaker Min Sook Lee. (R)

May 27, More than Just Books: United Church Resource Distribution

The United Church Publishing House has new offerings throughout the year. This program highlights two exciting new UCPH titles: *Streams of Faith* by Lois Wilson, and *Seismic Shifts* by Christopher White. Accompany *Spirit Connection* host Royal Orr on a tour of United Church Resource Distribution's Distribution Centre and meet the people who help bring you the resources you need. And learn more about what UCRD has to offer, from worship resources to giftware. (R)

June 2007

June 3 First Comes Love, then Comes Marriage?

From newlywed bliss to seasoned harmony—marriage through the eyes of three couples. With the divorce rate up, and more people choosing to live common law, what continues to draw couples to the altar, and why are same-sex couples eager to be included? What are some of the blessings and some of

the pitfalls of getting married today? What is the glue that holds couples together? Find out if these three duos have the answers. This show also features an interview with Jackie Harper, Family Ministries staff, about a book for couples called *Passion and Freedom*. (R)

June 10, Affirming Congregations

Creating inclusive communities and embracing diversity, regardless of sexual orientation, is vital to the life and work of Affirm congregations and ministries. Here are two stories of United Church congregations who have made the choice to be Affirming congregations. One story comes from Saint John, New Brunswick, and the other from Edmonton, Alberta. An interview about the history of the Affirming Congregation Program and its meaning follows these two stories. (R)

June 17, Building a Church: The Methodists of Colombia

The Methodists of Colombia are part of a young South American church that has heard God's call to create community with the poorest and most oppressed people in society. By reaching out to the poor, the Colombian Methodist Church is attracting new members from all backgrounds who are excited by its Wesleyan vision of social grace and its practical commitment to serve "the least of these." (R)

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July 2007

July 1, British Columbia Conference

Spirit Connection visits with British Columbia Conference president, the Rev. Janice Young. The heartache and practical side to sustaining the Camping Ministry in B.C. An update on medical missions in Bella Coola. (R)

July 8, Beyond Grief

The journey from grief and loss to healing is a personal one, but it can also be shared, particularly when a person is part of a nurturing community of faith and friends. In 1990, Father Michael Lapsley, then a university chaplain at the height of apartheid in South Africa, received a letter bomb, which not only caused severe physical and emotional damage, but also changed the course of his life. The Rev. Jamie Holtom tells of an unimaginable loss and his courageous path to recovery. (R)

July 15, The Power Within

For those who believe, prayer is a powerful healing tool. Personal stories from people of various faiths attest to the positive effects of prayer on their lives. This show is adapted from the award-winning, hour-long, Anglican video program, *The Power Within: Healing Through Prayer*, which is hosted by Peter Downie, and filmed in Canada, the U.S., and the U.K. (R)

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More Voices—Songs from the new hymnal, and musical celebration at Trinity United Church in Kitchener. Interview with United Church musician Bruce Harding; Linnea Good and Nancy Reeves on tour with music; and stories from *Adventures of the God Detectives*. An interview with Sharon Beckstead about the United Church of Canada Association of Musicians (UCCAM). (R)

July 29, A New Face: St. James United Church, Montreal

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August 2007

August 5, People of Faith Say Stop HIV and AIDS

AIDS 2006, an international gathering held in Toronto in August 2006, was a time for people living with HIV/AIDS, advocates, community leaders, scientists, health care providers, donors, and policy-makers to focus on the key challenges in collective efforts to provide HIV/AIDS care and treatment and to prevent new infections. Churches play a unique role in these ongoing efforts. At ecumenical meetings a week before the conference, church delegates discussed new opportunities for reaching even the most marginalized with dignity and hope. This program includes interviews with an ecumenical partner and with a United Church representative, who both talk about what this means to congregations. (R)

August 12–September 9, Sharing Our “Song of Faith” (2007 Lenten Series)

Each generation of The United Church of Canada has created a statement of faith that reflects the church’s understanding of what it means to be God’s people in their time. Our newest statement is called “A Song of Faith”; it embraces the present spirit of the church in a poetic and memorable style. In this series, guests from different faith traditions are invited to enter a conversation about portions of the “Song of Faith” along with United Church people. There are five programs in this series, including a special show for Easter Sunday, focusing on the resurrection.

See Appendix B for study guide.

August 12, Program One: God and Creation

The first paragraph of the document “A Song of Faith” is read and discussed with guests from the United Church as well as from the Sikh, Jewish, Islamic, and Tibetan Buddhist communities. There is some agreement about creation, mystery, and the use of feminine imagery when speaking of God. There are differing views about the Trinity and the description of God as being “Wholly Love.” A fascinating window into the faiths we share and the places where our paths diverge. (R)

August 19, Program Two: Brokenness, Grace, and Healing

A discussion about the balance between good and evil and how our beliefs cause us to respond when questions arise. In this program Royal Orr talks with guests from Sikh, Buddhist, Muslim, Jewish, and United Church perspectives. (R)

August 26, Program Three: Jesus, God's Love Incarnate

Who is Jesus—as God, human, Messiah, Prophet, Spirit-being, and Shaman? Discussion of how other faiths differ from Christianity and how Christians themselves are not all of one mind, of the challenge and mystery of this belief, and of its implications on a theology of creation. (R)

September 2007

September 2, Program Four: Hope beyond Life

What is the meaning of the concept of God making all things right with us and the rest of creation? A discussion with United Church members and representatives of other faiths about the possibility of otherworldly life, of life beyond death, and of the relationship of these beliefs to the fullness of life in the here and now. (R)

September 9, Program Five: Resurrection

Is belief in Christ's resurrection essential? For our United Church guests, the resurrection vindicates Jesus' testimony, is a proof of his divinity, links to a theology of creation, and is a vitally important mystery. They agree that the "Song of Faith" gives superb language to the excitement of our faith. (R)

September 16, Newfound Church

Church for People Who Don't Like Church; From the Web to the Pews—Emerging Spirit and Wondercafe; The Manitou Collection—Celebrating the Spirit of the People through Art. (R)

September 30, Men's Spirituality

Matthew Fox in conversation; men's spirituality and reclaiming mysticism in the church; men's ministry story. (R)

***Spirit Connection* Programs—20th Season: 2007**

October 2007

October 14, Youth Leadership Circle

Kofi Hope is a young man with a vision and persuasion. A United Church member from Mississauga, Ontario, he has been front and centre as an advocate for Black youth and nonviolent solutions to social problems. In this program, Kofi gathers an exciting group of like-minded young people from diverse countries, nationalities, and religions—all dedicated to changing the world and staying deeply rooted in their faith.

October 21, Invitation to Encounter

Created for the 20th anniversary of the United Church's apology to former students of residential schools, this program features former students of the Portage Indian Residential School reflecting on their experiences with members of Trinity United Church of Portage la Prairie, Manitoba.

October 28, Regina Ministry and Greening of Sacred Spaces

Faced with poverty on its doorstep, Knox United in Regina opens its doors to meet its neighbours and work with them for justice. The second part of this program deals with new energy-saving programs for churches, temples, and mosques that reduce their ecological footprint. Produced by Faith and the Common Good, this documentary shows what congregations can do to become part of the green revolution.

November 2007

November 4, United for Peace

This program launches the church's United for Peace campaign. Filmed this fall, the main part of this documentary gives voice to our partners in Israel and Palestine who are working on both sides to bring about a peaceful resolution to the long-standing turmoil in the region. It also highlights other aspects of the campaign that congregations can incorporate into their worship and mission lives.

November 11, For the Boys

This is the award-winning story of the Canadian crew of a Halifax bomber, shot down over Belgium in 1944, and their struggle to get through enemy lines. (R)

November 18, After the Tsunami: Rebuilding Our Villages and Our Lives

People around the world sent money and support to the people of southeast Asia and Africa after the tsunami in 2004, but was the flood of money really helpful? This documentary, produced by Development and Peace, looks at the lessons learned from that experience.

November 25, Building a Church: The Methodists of Colombia

The Methodists of Colombia are part of a young South American church that has heard God's call to create community with the poorest and most oppressed people in society. By reaching out to the poor, the Colombian Methodist Church is attracting new members from all backgrounds who are excited by its Wesleyan vision of social grace and its practical commitment to serve "the least of these." (R)

December 2007

December 2, Empire

The spectre of empire is so subtle that we often fail to recognize it in our lives. But for a group of young people in Canada and those who live on the margins in Colombia, the manifestations of empire are clearly visible, and they are actively resisting—but can they be successful?

December 9, Stories from B.C.

On this show, meet Alvin Dixon, who reflects on his life and work with residential school survivors as they move toward healing; travel up the coast to Bella Coola to meet a young teacher who is working to reintroduce the community's traditional language to his students; meet Bob Burroughs, who has chronicled the history of United Church hospitals; and visit one of the remaining hospitals on the isolated shore.

December 16, Christmas in Bethlehem

The community of Bethlehem once hosted thousands of pilgrims at Christmas. But with the rise in tensions, fewer and fewer Christians are venturing through the checkpoints into this Palestinian town. A look at life in modern Bethlehem through the eyes of its residents.

December 23, Music @ Metropolitan

An award-winning show that showcases the talented musicians of Metropolitan United Church in Toronto in a magnificent collection of Christmas carols.

December 30, The Finale

A look back on 20 years of *Spirit Connection*, the United Church's television show that blazed a new path for religious television, showcasing good news and inspiring stories from across the church in Canada and overseas. A look back at 20 years of broadcasting through the memories of the people behind the scenes.

Day by Day, Step by Step - 28 minute video

PURPOSES:

To show through one project, focused on post tsunami recovery how the generosity of Canadians can help support affected communities to recover and rebuild their lives.

AUDIENCE:

Adults and young people

PREVIEW THE VIDEO, INCLUDING ANY OTHER PERSONS INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAM

TECHNICAL SET-UP

1. Cue up video cassette at start of the tape.
2. The room does not need to be darkened. It should be the same as for regular television viewing.
3. Have chairs arranged so all can see the screen.
4. Video is best for use in small groups. If you expect more than 20 people, you can either hook up a second monitor or get a large monitor and put it on a high stand.

Leaders' note:

IN ORDER TO START WHERE PEOPLE ARE AND BUILD ON THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE, IN SMALL GROUPS TALK ABOUT:

Introduction.

Tamil Nadu state in south India was one of the areas badly hit by the Indian Ocean tsunami. Canadian churches were already present in that area supporting the work of partners through committed relationships. The priority work of these local organizations included advocacy for the rights of traditional fishers in the face of foreign and large commercial fishing boats; commercial shrimp farming; sand mining, the rights of marginalized Dalit (so-called untouchables) and Advivasi (tribal) communities; access to education; empowerment of women; strengthening local governance systems; and reduced economic disparity.

This coastline regularly experiences cyclonic storms, but the impact of the tsunami was far more damaging to communities.

Think about these questions:

What do you remember about the tsunami and what happened to communities?

What do you know about your denomination's global partners?

INTRODUCE THE VIDEO: This video tells how four Canadian church organizations cooperated in a joint response to communities in South India devastated by the tsunami Dec 26, 2004

**AS PARTICIPANTS VIEW THE VIDEO,
SUGGEST THEY WATCH FOR:**

What do you see are the challenges that this community faced before the tsunami hit?

What are differences in the difficulties identified by men and by women?

In what way is life going to be the same or different from before the tsunami?

SHOW THE VIDEO

RESPONSE:

What are the strengths of the village community?

In what way has life changed for the community?

How did the roles and needs of men and women differ?

What was the response of the children in Canada and India?

ACTION OR FOLLOWUP:

Check the websites for your denomination for their continued activity in tsunami affected areas

(also sometimes included)

CLOSING PRAYER:

PREPARED BY: Margaret Sumadh,
The United Church of Canada

Study Guide for Sharing Our “Song of Faith”

Study Guide for group or individual use

(Discussion questions in this guide are based on the conversations in this series.)

Table of Contents

Introduction to the Series	3
Program 1: God and Creation.....	4
Program 2: Brokenness, Grace, and Healing.....	5
Program 3: Jesus, God’s Love Incarnate	6
Program 4: Hope beyond Life	7
Program 5: Resurrection	8
Interview Locations in the Series	9
Other Resources.....	9

Introduction to the Series

Each generation of The United Church of Canada has created a statement of faith that reflects the church's understanding of what it means to be God's people in their time. Our newest statement is called "A Song of Faith"; it embraces the present spirit of the church in a poetic and memorable style. In this series, guests from different faith traditions are invited to enter a conversation with United Church people about portions of the "Song of Faith." There are five programs in the series, including a special show focusing on the resurrection.

Program 1: God and Creation

The first paragraph of the document "A Song of Faith" is read and discussed with guests from the United Church as well as from the Sikh, Jewish, Islamic, and Tibetan Buddhist communities. There is some agreement about creation, mystery, and the use of feminine imagery when speaking of God. There are differing views about the Trinity and the description of God as being "Wholly Love." A fascinating window into the faiths we share and the places where our paths diverge.

Related excerpt from "A Song of Faith":

God is Holy Mystery,
beyond complete knowledge,
above perfect description.

Yet,
in love,
the one eternal God seeks relationship.

So God creates the universe
and with it the possibility of being and relating.
God tends the universe,
mending the broken and reconciling the estranged.
God enlivens the universe,
guiding all things toward harmony with their Source.

Grateful for God's loving action,
We cannot keep from singing.

WATCH THE VIDEO/DVD

Discussion Questions

1. "God is holy mystery, beyond complete knowledge, above perfect description." Does this work for you as a fundamental statement about God?
2. The Trinity. In "A Song of Faith" some language is very traditional (God, Christ, and Spirit), some much more modern sounding (source of life, Living Word), and some possibly problematic (mother, father, friend). Does any one of these really speak to you?
3. "We witness to Holy Mystery that is Wholly Love." Is it too limiting to say God is Wholly Love?

Program 2: Brokenness, Grace, and Healing

A discussion about the balance between good and evil and how our beliefs cause us to respond when questions arise. In this program Royal Orr talks with guests from Sikh, Buddhist, Muslim, Jewish, and United Church perspectives.

Related excerpt from “A Song of Faith”:

Made in the image of God,

we yearn for the fulfillment that is life in God.

Yet we choose to turn away from God.

We surrender ourselves to sin,

a disposition revealed in selfishness, cowardice, or apathy.

This brokenness in human life and community

is an outcome of sin.

Sin is not only personal

but accumulates

to become habitual and systemic forms

of injustice, violence, and hatred.

WATCH THE VIDEO/DVD

Discussion Questions

1. Rabbi Dov Whitman says, “No one makes us sin. We choose to sin. No one causes us to sin. It happens.” Discuss.
2. If God’s creation is good, why are there so many bad things?
3. “A Song of Faith” has a recipe or map to get back on the path—repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation, and transformation. What do you make of that path? If we’ve gone off the path how can we come back to the path?

Program 3: Jesus, God's Love Incarnate

Who is Jesus—as God, Human, Messiah, Prophet, Spirit-being, and Shaman? Discussion of how other faiths differ from Christianity and how Christians themselves are not all of one mind, of the challenge and mystery of this belief, and of its implications on a theology of creation.

Related excerpt from “A Song of Faith”:

We find God made known in Jesus of Nazareth,
and so we sing of God the Christ, the Holy One embodied.

We sing of Jesus,

 a Jew,
 born to a woman in poverty
 in a time of social upheaval
 and political oppression...

We sing praise to God incarnate...

Because his witness to love was threatening,
 those exercising power sought to silence Jesus.

He suffered abandonment and betrayal,
 state-sanctioned torture and execution.

He was crucified.

But death was not the last word.

God raised Jesus from death,
 turning sorrow into joy,
 despair into hope.

We sing of Jesus raised from the dead.

We sing hallelujah.

WATCH THE VIDEO/DVD

Discussion Questions

1. Who is Jesus for you? How does this compare to how he is portrayed in “A Song of Faith”? (See excerpt above.)
2. How was Jesus a threat to those in power?
3. We sing praise to God “incarnate”—a traditional word with deep connections to traditions in Christianity. What are the challenges to making this seem real to Canadians in 2007, in Canada, and beyond?

Program 4: Hope beyond Life

What is the meaning of the concept of God making all things right with us and the rest of creation? A discussion with United Church members and representatives of other faiths about the possibility of otherworldly life, of life beyond death, and of the relationship of these beliefs to the fullness of life in the here and now.

Related excerpt from "A Song of Faith":

We place our hope in God.

We sing of a life beyond life

and a future good beyond imagining:

a new heaven and a new earth,

the end of sorrow, pain, and tears,

Christ's return and life with God,

the making new of all things.

WATCH THE VIDEO/DVD

Discussion Questions

1. In "A Song of Faith" we talk about life beyond life. What's your understanding of what awaits us beyond death?
2. "A Song of Faith" says we place our hope in God. We sing of a life beyond life, and a future good beyond imagining. What is your understanding of "we place our hope in God"?
3. One thing that has traditionally been part of a Christian understanding is judgment by God or Christ. This is absent from "A Song of Faith." How important is the belief that there awaits some sort of judgment?

Program 5: Resurrection

Is belief in Christ's resurrection essential? For our United Church guests the resurrection vindicates Jesus' testimony, is a proof of his divinity, links to a theology of creation, and is a vitally important mystery. They agree that "A Song of Faith" gives superb language to the excitement of our faith.

Related excerpt from "A Song of Faith":

But death was not the last word.

God raised Jesus from death,

 turning sorrow into joy,

 despair into hope.

We sing of Jesus raised from the dead.

We sing hallelujah.

By becoming flesh in Jesus,

 God makes all things new.

In Jesus' life, teaching, and self-offering,

 God empowers us to live in love.

WATCH THE VIDEO/DVD

Discussion Questions

1. All of us have had the Easter morning experience of saying "He is risen." What do we mean by that?
2. There are some who say that if you can't work your way into believing in the resurrection you are not a Christian at all—that this is on the short list of things that you have to believe. Do you believe that?

Interview Locations in the Series

Victoria College Chapel, University of Toronto

Gurudwara Sahib Quebec Inc., Montreal

Hillel House, Montreal

Bloor Street United Church, Toronto

Moonstar Lodge, Durham, Ontario

Blue Heron Zen Buddhist Centre, Hamilton

Royal York Road United Church, Toronto

St. Andrew's United Church, Toronto

Islamic Foundation of Toronto

Other Resources

On the Website

www.united-church.ca (search for "song of faith")

Video/DVD

Welcome to The United Church of Canada

A 7-minute reading and pictorial consideration of "A New Creed."

DVD

800 001 464; \$3.00 each for 1–10 copies

800 001 465; \$2.00 each for 11 or more

VHS

800 001 466; \$5.00 each for 1–10 copies

800 001 467; \$4.00 each for 11 or more

Available from UCRD (1-800-288-7365 or 416-253-5456) and participating presbytery resource centres.

In Print

Singing a Song of Faith: Daily Reflections for Lent

Edited by Nancy E. Hardy
978-1-55134-156-9; \$10.95

Available from UCRD (1-800-288-7365 or 416-253-5456) and participating presbytery resource centres.