



University Hill Congregation
United Church of Canada

6000 Iona Drive
Vancouver BC V6T 1L4
604 822-0638
www.uhill.net

January 16, 2014

Brothers and Sisters,

This letter invites you to participate in an important chapter in the life of University Hill Congregation. As you are aware, Ed will retire on June 30, 2015, in less than a year and a half. While we are happy for Ed as he moves into a new chapter in his life, for many of us he is the only minister we have ever known. Even if not the first, by the time he leaves us as our pastor, he will have been in this congregation for some twenty years, a significant period of time in both his and our life.

While change is always disquieting, we believe that God has provided us with a wonderful and exciting opportunity to explore who we are, what our needs are as individuals, as families, and as a congregation and most importantly, what God's future has in store for us. In this time, we hope to explore how Ed and the Congregation say good-bye to each other as minister and congregants, but also how we prepare for a future with a new pastor.

The first part of this process commences the week of February 9 and will culminate in a Congregational Retreat to take place at VST on Saturday, February 15 and Sunday, February 16.

We are truly blessed to be led through this time by the Very Reverend Dr. Peter Short, former Moderator of the United Church of Canada. Peter is a skilled Christian facilitator who will tease out our concerns, our fears and our hopes. The attached biography and introductory letter from Peter will give you a sense of the gifts that he brings to his ministry with us.

Peter will be our preacher on Sunday, February 9. He will also be available to meet with congregants following worship on February 9 (12:30-2:00) pm, during Bible at Breakfast (7:30-9:00 am) on Wednesday, February 12 and Thursday evening (6-9 pm), February 13 at Janet Reid's home. If none of those times work for some we will explore the possibility of one additional meeting during the day or on an evening mid-week. Please take time to sign-up for one of these gatherings (or to indicate your interest in an additional meeting) at the entrance to the Chapel on Sunday or by emailing our office (uhilladm@shaw.ca).

The culmination of this first part of the transition process will be a Congregational Retreat entitled: "Backstage With Angels: A Retreat for Pastoral Transition." We will gather on Saturday, February 15 (9:30 - 4:30) and Sunday, February 16 (10:30 - 4:30) at VST. Lunch and a children's program will be provided on both days. The cost of registration is \$47.50 per adult with our request that those who are able contribute a bit more and those who are overly burdened by the fee speak with one of us. We intend that no one will be deterred from

participating by the cost. If it is beyond your means the cost will be subsidized by the congregation. There is an additional fee of \$15 per family with children participating in the children's program. On Saturday and Sunday, parking will be available on a first come, first served basis next door at Carey Hall for a fee of \$6 per day.

We expect this process to provide us with helpful questions to ponder through the upcoming months. In September Peter will rejoin us as we move more concretely toward saying farewell to our present minister and welcoming our next pastor.

You can register for the Congregational Retreat online at www.uhill.net or using hard copies that will be available on Sundays at the entrance to the Chapel.

We are excited about this opportunity that God has provided. We urge you to participate to the extent that you are able and we particularly encourage each of you to join with us at the Congregational Retreat on February 15 and 16.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ed Searcy", is positioned to the right of the "Sincerely," text.

Walter Rilkoﬀ

Ed Searcy