



Special News Update

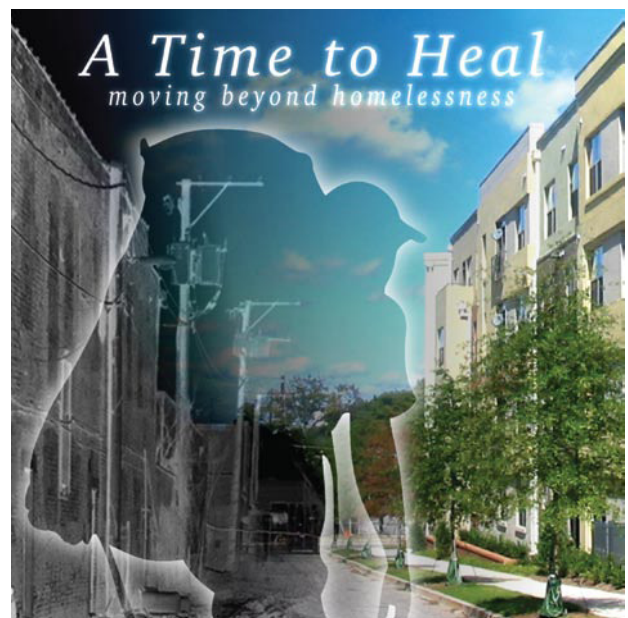
October 14th Concert to Launch Fundraising CD Collection

Helping to end homelessness and furthering the work of First United Church Mission in the city's troubled Downtown Eastside will be the focus of an upcoming benefit concert and CD launch at St. Andrew's-Wesley United Church, on Wednesday, October 14th at 8p.m.

"The Downtown Eastside continues to be the poorest postal code in Canada," says Rev. Ric Matthews of First United. "There is an urgent need to break the cycle of homelessness, mental illness and addiction that afflicts this area and to build a greater sense of belonging and hope. That is our continuing goal, but to achieve it, we need the help of the larger community around us."

Veteran CBC broadcaster Bill Richardson will host the live concert which will showcase inspiring music chosen from the CD—from classical and jazz to First Nations and blues—and feature well-known singers and musicians such as Jim Byrnes, Steve Maddock, Linda Lee Thomas, and Dalannah Gail Bowen. The concert, which is co-sponsored by End Homelessness Now, marks the official launch of a new music CD to help end homelessness called "A Time to Heal: moving beyond homelessness".

The CD—with its themes of hope and renewed spirit – includes artists such as world renowned violinist Pinchas Zukerman with the National Arts Centre Wind Quintet, jazz bassist Jodi Proznick, the Vancouver Chamber Choir and country music's Emerson Drive. Canadian composer Larry Nickel arranged many of the songs for the CD, which has been produced for First United by Laverne G'froerer and Jacquie Forbes-Roberts. Proceeds from CD sales will be used to support the work of the First United Church Mission but will also be made available to organizations across the country on a proceeds-sharing basis. During the evening, Reverend Ric Matthews will provide an update on the work being done by the First United Church Mission, its volunteers and supporters, as well as plans to build a new kind of community on the downtown eastside for people living on the margins of society. As well, Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson will present the 2009 Local Hero Awards honouring some of the exceptional individuals and organizations dedicated to ending homelessness.



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