



Connections

Humber Valley United
the friendly community church

December 2016

INSIDE
THIS ISSUE

Reverend's Advent Reflection Presence versus Presents

Advent is the beginning of the church year. It is a time when we look forward to the coming of Jesus. Advent begins in darkness. Each week we light a candle: hope, peace, joy, love and then, on Christmas Eve, the candle of Christ. Advent can be seen as a gift of time, of spiritual deepening.

However, in the culture in which we find ourselves, Advent has become the number of shopping days left before Christmas. As for Christmas, instead of being the day when Jesus is born, it has become the day when presents are opened. We seem to get busier, instead of slowing down.

In congregational life too, this is one of the busiest seasons, next to Easter. This is a season when Christians especially yearn for something more – something more than consumerism. They are looking for an opportunity to experience the true meaning of Christmas, which is the celebration of the birth of Jesus, God in a human child, who came to show us how to love one another.

This Christmas, can we consider giving more of our "presence" rather than "presents"? "God sent a present into the world, the gift of a loving presence named Jesus", writes Joyce Rupp, in her book "Out of the Ordinary". What Jesus gave most was his personal time and attention. Jesus walked and shared a meal with people, he healed and comforted them. The good news is the light of Christ can be found in each one of us. This Advent, I invite you to share that light with others by being with others. One can be physically present with or spiritually present through prayer. Here are some suggestions from Joyce Rupp.

- Be with someone who needs you.
- Be with a person who gives you hope.
- Be with yourself.
- Be with a child.
- Be with the earth.
- Be with those whose hope is faint.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your presence. It's been an honour and a pleasure to be serving as your supply minister during these four months while Rev. Mark Winger is on sabbatical. I have found Humber Valley people to be very warm and welcoming. The lay leaders and staff members have been very supportive and helpful. I've enjoyed collaborating on music and worship with Minister of Music, Paul Chant. All of you have made my transition to this position very easy and comfortable. You are giving me the presence I need to thrive and to exercise my ministry. For this I am grateful.

Humber Valley is being present to the community by offering inspiring worship services with excellent music. You are providing meeting space for community use at a reasonable rate. You are Outreach-minded as you care deeply and give to various projects. You care for seniors by providing pastoral care and worship services at retirement homes. You provide Christian Education to young people through the Junior Choir and Church school. You have a strong foundation on which to build.

May God bless you and your family during this Advent and Christmas season.

Rev. Irene Ty

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

Our Stephen Ministry begins training Stephen Ministers on November 27th. There is still an opportunity for you to become a Stephen Minister if you are called to this wonderful healing Ministry our Church is now blessed with. See page 17.

Voting on Remits We have the opportunity to have a say in the future of the United Church of Canada. See pages 14-15.

*Jewels of Christmas
December 16
See page 23.*

Elder's Name _____

Elder's Phone # _____



We have been blessed by the ministry of Rev. Irene Ty who in a few short months has come to know so many of us and has participated so fully in the life of Humber Valley United Church.

Political events in 2016 have given us all pause. The Brexit vote in England and the election of Donald Trump in the United States are sure to change the world order we know. These votes can be interpreted as a sign that many people are disillusioned with their leaders and have lost patience with the lack of action in areas that have significant impacts on their lives. So many have lost their livelihoods because of changes to the economic order, so many are fleeing conflict and failed states, so many young people are unable to find meaningful jobs that would allow them to have a stake in normal society, and so many feel threatened by the pressures of immigration.

The outcomes of other upcoming European elections will be closely watched, particularly in Germany, France, and Denmark. The intentions of Russia and emerging giants in Asia – China and India – will soon be more evident.

There is a perception that political elites are more concerned with retaining power and prestige than dealing with the needs of ordinary people who make up most of society. The fact that our political systems, our economies, and

the freedoms we have fought for are meant to serve the good of everyone, not just the economic and political elite, seems forgotten.

We need to pray that our new leadership in Canada under Justin Trudeau, U.S. president-elect Donald Trump, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, and Prime Minister Theresa May of Great Britain find the wisdom and the strength to lead the free world through the coming challenges. Perhaps we should add them all to our Prayer Chain!

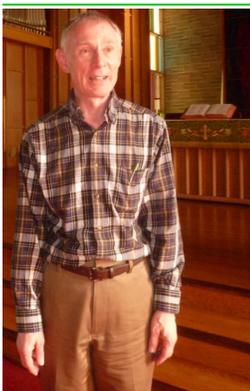
This issue of Connections is brimming with news about our vital congregation and the many wonderful things that have happened since September. It brings news about Advent and Christmas – and this year, when Christmas Day falls on a Sunday, we'll be able to take time out to celebrate the birth of the Christ Child together on Christmas morning.

I love to hear from you. Please send me your comments and suggestions.

Susanne@hyneslegal.ca

Susanne Hynes

We have a new Pastoral Care Supply Minister



Please welcome Rev. Rick Tamas to Humber Valley.

Pastoral Care is one of Humber Valley's top three priorities and so we were very pleased to welcome Rev. Rick Tamas to the church staff at the beginning of November.

Until Rev. Mark Winger returns from his sabbatical leave in early January 2017, Rev. Tamas will be working for 8 hours per week with our Supply Minister Rev. Irene Ty and with the Pastoral Care Team to enhance the provision of pastoral care to members of the congregation.

Some of you may already have been contacted by Rick by phone or in person. Rick has also met with the Pastoral Care Team and before he leaves Humber Valley we look forward to benefiting from his wide knowledge and experience of pastoral care.

Rev. Tamas is an ordained United Church Minister

currently working half time in the area of pastoral care at Islington United Church. He is a trained Stephen Minister and a Pastoral Counsellor/Instructor at the Toronto Centre for Pastoral Counselling Education at the Toronto School of Theology. He was a pulpit supply minister at Richview United, Windermere United and Heart Lake United, 2012-2014 and was the full-time Minister of Youth at Timothy Eaton Memorial Church, 2003-2012.

Rev. Tamas has degrees from the University of Toronto (St. Michael's College and Emmanuel College), Ryerson University and also holds a Certificate in Pastoral Counselling Education and Spirituality Integrated Psychotherapy. He is currently a Doctoral candidate in Human Relationships at Wilfred Laurier University.

Pastoral Care is Alive and Well at Humber Valley

The work of the Humber Valley Pastoral Care Team has been growing. This is partly because pastoral care is one of Humber Valley's top three priority areas along with leadership and communications.

This fall, we have been blessed by the work of our Supply Minister, Rev. Irene Ty, who has taken a great interest in pastoral care and who has been actively working with the Team and directly contacting and visiting members of the congregation in need. More recently, she has been joined in her pastoral care work by Rev. Rick Tamas, our Supply Minister of Pastoral Care, who is working with us for 8 hours per week until the first week of January 2017. He, too, has been contacting and visiting congregation members in need and will also lead some of the mid-week services we conduct in the local seniors' residences.

As a Team, we try to keep track of members of the congregation who are hurting in some way and in doing this we are seeking closer working relationships with the elders, the Prayer Chain and the new Stephen Ministry program. A new venture for us this fall is bringing a dramatic production to Humber Valley on November 26th called "I'm Still Here" about dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

More about that in the next *Connections*. And on Wednesday December 14th, at 7.30 pm, the Pastoral Care Team is supporting the "Service of Comfort and Joy" specially designed for those who may have suffered difficulty or loss and for whom Christmas may seem less festive.

Rev. Irene will be leading this service and all are welcome. One of our very successful initiatives is the card ministry operated by Wanda Sekunda (please see story in the accompanying box).

We know that Humber Valley is a very caring church and that a lot of pastoral care takes place informally within other groups in the church and we encourage this. However, in many cases, the personal involvement of the minister is very much appreciated by the recipients and can have a positive and special impact. In this area of minis-

try, Rev. Irene has demonstrated her great gifts of caring and concern and has become a comfort to the many people that she has touched. She will be greatly missed at the end of her time with us.

Lay members of the Pastoral Care Team are Bill Cahoon, Stan Charteris, David Dallimore (Chair), Rose Maclean, Lynn Manning, Juanita McPherson, Sally Roper and Wanda Sekunda. Please feel free to contact any member of the Team if you would like to find out more about pastoral care at Humber Valley.

David Dallimore

Pastoral Card Ministry

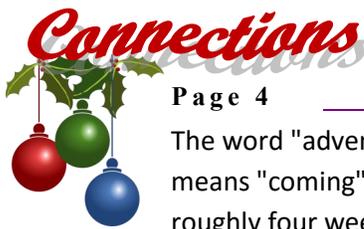
For several years now, Wanda Sekunda, a member of the Pastoral Care Team, has been sending "thinking of you", "sympathy", and Christmas cards on behalf of the Pastoral Care Team and the church, to members of the congregation who may be ill, hospitalized, recently bereaved, lost a job or suffered a marriage breakdown, etc.

This is an effective and simple way to let people know that we are thinking about them at critical times in their lives. In 2016, Wanda will have mailed over 90 cards including Christmas cards.

Where possible, to save money, we use cards donated to us by people who have received charity cards but do not use them. If you have any spare cards, Wanda would be pleased to receive them. They can be left in the church office for her.

Thank you Wanda for your continuing and caring card ministry. It is much appreciated by the recipients and is an important link with members of the congregation.

Many of the photos in this edition of *Connections* were taken by Bill Cahoon.



Adventus: We wait upon God

The word "advent," from the Latin *adventus*, means "coming" or "arrival." As we enter the roughly four week season of Advent, the season of contrasts, penitence and preparation are contrasted with the festive season.

For some, Advent is a difficult, sad time among the endless Christmas songs, lights and parties. Advent originally was a time of fasting and self-reflection versus today's Christmas festivities.

The Liturgical colours are violet or blue. The first Sunday in Advent is the beginning of the Church's liturgical year as opposed to the ending of the calendar year. Advent looks to the future while refusing to ignore the troubles that plague the world, the church, the family, and our souls. Jesus could not escape troubles. He was born in shadows, and hunted by officials. On Sundays in Advent we prepare

for the amazing news of Christmas. We wait upon God. The root word for "wait" in Hebrew and Latin means hope.

The Church Year opens on a world and a people with terrible cycles of despair, conflict, grief and hatred holding us hostage but at the same time Advent is where we look to a future where the earth's pain can be healed. This year we are able to celebrate together in our Sanctuary, on Christmas day, singing hymns of hope, peace, joy and love.

God of hope and promise, be with us throughout this Advent season and draw us ever closer as we journey together toward the stable and the birth of your Son, our Saviour. Amen.

Joanne Stenerson

Clerk of Session



Daytimers—from Hallowe'en to Christmas

What fun the October Daytimers gathering was. It fell right on HALLOWEEN day. We offered a prize for anyone who came in costume, and people really rose to the occasion. Rose Maclean was a stunningly authentic witch and Wendy MacBeth amused us all, coming as pooh bear.

Shelagh Chapman was responsible for planning lunch and her baked ham and scalloped potatoes, followed by home made pumpkin cake were a culinary treat.

We were fascinated to learn about the do's and don'ts of recycling and about the fate of our garbage when we bid it goodbye. Michelle from the city's waste management department gave an excellent, illustrated presentation, even showing us an entertaining video clip of a family of raccoons trying, unsuccessfully, to get into the new secure green bins.

If you thought October sounded great, be assured that the last two events of 2016 will be too. On November 28th Brian Goodman will be our guest, speaking about wealth management and financial matters.

On December 19th, we will have our annual Advent Communion Service, at which our fabulous minister Irene will preside, assisted by Rev Tim Bruneau. There will be festive food for lunch. Tapestry residence are providing a delicious dessert. Lorienne Swales, Paul Chant and a few of the handbell players will bring us some enjoyable music including some carols to sing along to, and Santa has been invited to drop by.

Come for the first time or the umpteenth time. You will be warmly welcomed.

Judith





Open for Christmas on Christmas Day

**Christmas Falls on a Sunday this year.
Yes, we will have Church that Day.**

Christmas Day has not fallen on a Sunday since 2011. Prior to that, 2005, 1994, 1983, 1977, 1966 So, if it does not seem to happen that often, you are correct.

Interestingly, in recent years many Christian churches have not held services on Christmas Day. Christmas Eve has become the time for remembering the birth of Jesus. We used to have a late service on Christmas Eve that concluded at midnight. At least, then it was Christmas by the time we got home.

More surprising still, some churches do not hold Christmas Day services even when Christmas falls on a Sunday!

In 2011 the pastor of the large Willow Creek congregation in the United States explained,

"At first glance it does sound contrarian, but we don't see it as not having church on Christmas. We see it as decentralizing the church on Christmas - hundreds of thousands of experiences going on around Christmas trees. The best way to honor the birth of Jesus is for families to have a more personal experience on that day."

This will probably ring true to many of you. Not so much to others. However, for me, as the years go by, Christmas

seems to have become less frenetic. I look forward to spending some of the day in church. I do remember the years when the children were little and up at 4:30 to see if Santa had arrived. I do remember the long Christmas drives to the farm to see family for dinner. I also remember the years when I had one day without teaching before Christmas fell upon me. Often I was up until 3:00 a.m. wrapping gifts that would be unwrapped within a few hours.

But I do also remember those few Christmases that fell on a Sunday and we somehow found a quiet hour to go to church. There are lots of crazy and busy memories of Christmas past, but those quiet hours on Christmas Day stand out as special and equally unforgettable.

Humber Valley United Church will be "open for Christmas" this year. If you are nearby, drop in for a little quiet Christmas celebration of a spiritual sort.

We will be here.

Same time. Same station.

Donna McCorquodale



Letter from Buckingham Palace



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

14th November 2016

Dear Mrs. Kerr,

The Queen wishes me to thank you for your letter, sent on behalf of the Humber Valley United Church Women, telling Her Majesty of the party you held, *A Tea Fit for a Queen*, in celebration of The Queen's ninetieth birthday.

Her Majesty was pleased to see the photographs you enclosed and glad to hear everyone had such an enjoyable afternoon. The Queen was also very touched to know that funds raised at this event were sent to Fort McMurray to aid relief efforts following the devastating wildfires.

Her Majesty sends her good wishes to everyone at the Humber Valley UCW and hopes you will understand that, because of the enormous number of letters and messages she has received in the last few months, it has not been possible to reply to you until now. I am to thank you, once again, for your thought for The Queen at this time.

Yours sincerely,

Susan Hussey

Lady-in-Waiting

Mrs R Kerr



About a Tea Fit for a Queen

The thick cream envelope arrived at Renee Kerr's mailbox on November 17th. It contained a long awaited response from her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, to the letter sent by Renee back in June after our successful 'Tea Fit For A Queen' 90th birthday party here. We had included a montage of photos from our Royal Tea Party, and a description of the event and our best wishes for Her Majesty's birthday.

The Queen's letter is on the previous page and below is the lovely card that accompanied it, showing a photo of Her Majesty reading a letter and sending her thanks for our good wishes.

Carolyn Whiteside



Margo Watt and Carolyn Whiteside at HVUC's traditional British afternoon Tea Party to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's 90th birthday. June 9th, 2016.



Week of Guided Prayer 2017

Mark your calendars for March 19-25



Explore new ways of praying

Become aware of God's presence in your life

Speak privately with an experienced prayer guide



Holy Currencies Seminars Return in 2017 Your Call to Participate

About 2 years ago, six members of HVUC joined with other United Church congregations in a series of seminars and workshops organized by Emmanuel College and led by Rev. Eric Law of the Kaleidoscope Institute in Los Angeles. If you talk to any of the participants, you will surely hear that each one was deeply moved both spiritually and intellectually. They came away excited to implement some of their learning as part of the road map guiding and securing not only the sustainability, but also the growth of our congregation as we move forward.

At subsequent Leadership Council meetings, there was strong agreement that, should another Holy Currencies program be offered, capital funds would be made available for another team to take part.

That wish has come true and a new program is being offered early next year. The program has been tweaked slightly to include more webinars and fewer group meetings. The name has also been changed to Stewardship 365 but the focus on the 6 Holy Currencies remains.

An excerpt about the program calls it “an on-line curriculum that empowers local congregations to expand their vision of stewardship beyond money to include the currencies of relationship, truth, wellness, gracious leadership and time.”

Two Coins Each Sunday

About a year ago, Rev. Mark Winger told us the story of a widow who gave all she had - 2 small coins - as her offering to God (Mark 12 and Luke 21). We have also recently discussed Dr. Eric Law's “Holy Currencies”, and heard of our Stewardship responsibilities towards The United Church of Canada, Mission and Service, and our own church's many Outreach and internal projects. In addition to our “gifts of time and talent”, many of us use the PAR system of giving to the Church and we are told that our financial team prefers that as a way of balancing our budget over the year.

However, I was moved by the story of the Widow and her gifts.... and I thought of the significance of small acts... for both the giver and the receiver.

Since that day, I have been putting the two largest coins in my pocket or purse at the time into the collection plate as it is passed every Sunday..... in addition to my monthly

There will be six, 90 minute webinars on Wednesday evenings starting February 1st and ending April 19th, 2017. If enough churches in our region participate, there will also be 2 regional meetings – one at the beginning of the program and one following. Dates for the regional sessions are not yet determined.

It would be wonderful to enroll a team of 4 to 6 people in this program. If you have an interest in taking part or simply wish to learn more about what is involved, please contact Steve McCorquodale or Gary Halpenny.

Ideally, we should establish the team by the middle of December, **so don't delay!!** First come – First served!!

Gary Halpenny



offering through PAR. Sometimes it is just a dime and a quarter; and other times it is two toonies. This act allows me the practise of giving regularly and mindfully during our worship service.

So I propose that starting in this “Season of Giving”, every individual in the congregation.... every Sunday and ir-regardless of our usual church or other charitable donations, reach into our pockets or purses and place our largest two coins into the collection plate as it passes. I have volunteered to monthly count and prepare these coins for deposit perhaps half to Mission and Service and half for HVUC projects.

Let us share our blessings.

Catherine Ireland



This Old Church

For the past two plus years, I have prepared this column to keep you informed about the work undertaken in the basement to deal with the 2013 flood. Over that time you got an insight into the time and effort that was needed to complete the restoration and improvements to the church basement.

This will be the LAST REPORT to you on the restoration as we are FINISHED and any ongoing work is now maintenance. That good news is sweetened by the fact that there are no monies owing and the total costs—approximately \$295,000—came in under budget. Your direct donations, contributions from some of our renters, the assistance of the Humber Valley Foundation, and the UCW's generosity—as well as the insurance coverage—has funded all of the restoration.

While we undertook that restoration work, we took the opportunity to remove all of the lighting units in the church and replace them with LED fixtures and/or bulbs that are more energy efficient and longer lasting. This work was funded by direct donations from some members of the congregation, a large rebate from Ontario Hydro, and the Toronto Hydro conservation program. Consequently, there was no direct cost to the Church. The new LED lighting units have also reduced our electrical consumption and related billing for electricity.

Rick Balmer, Ruth's son, was instrumental in guiding us through the convoluted approval process and his tenacity resulted in the approval of our applications for rebates. We are indebted to him for his service to HVUC.

Some new projects that will lower our operational costs are being undertaken by the Property Team:

1. Improvement of the insulation efficiency of some of our wooden doors and door frames is being reviewed with an eye to their replacement with high effective insulated door units.
2. With the financial contribution by the UCW; the stoves in the upper kitchen are being replaced to benefit both use and efficiency. In addition, a new freezer is being donated to replace an older and less efficient chest style unit currently in the basement.
3. The City of Toronto has accepted HVUC into its rebated waste removal program and thus we are now bound to sort our waste and recycling in strict accordance with the Waste Management program and rules. This has resulted in eliminating a large bill from our monthly expenses. Please continue to do your part by following these rules to ensure that we remain in compliance and thus remain eligible for the rebated funding.

See you at the Church!

Peter White

co-chair Property Team.



REFLECTIONS

PAST

May we honour
 those who have gone before
 who gave us life;
 and helped to mold us
 into the people that we have become!

PRESENT

The present is a daily gift (hence present)
 From our Heavenly Father
 May we use it wisely
 In service to others!

FUTURE

Tomorrow is the future -
 Who knows what wonders
 it will have in store for us
 and for our children?

We raise our hearts to the King of Kings
 in prayer
 May THY will be done!
 AMEN

At this time of year may I wish all a
 very Merry Christmas season!

Submitted,
Carol Zachar

Christmas Baking

*Need help with your baking or catering?
 Specialties are mince meat turnovers,
 Christmas pudding, shortbread,
 biscotti, barks,
 candied nuts and
 more!*



Please contact Laura Boyd

delishcakesandcatering@gmail.com or 416-301-3045 for pricing.



Stewardship Update

It's that time of year again! We are approaching the end of the year and operating finances are in a deficit. In the past couple of years we have overcome the deficit and either balanced the budget or come close – all thanks to the generosity of the congregation.

We can do it again. Each year the congregation has stepped up and been very generous in the last 2 months of the year.

We have additional expenses this year, some of which will occur in the last two months and make balancing the budget even more challenging.

There is also very positive and meaningful news. This year we received an anonymous one-time donation of \$75,000. (This \$75,000 is not shown in the statements as income; rather it is held in a savings account on the balance sheet.) If we end the year in a deficit position, we can draw down some of these funds. The smaller the amount of the deficit, the longer these funds will sustain us.

There are always wonderful projects to spend money on but we should not spend money that we cannot afford. A balanced budget means we are living within our means and we are sustainable.

Generous support.

We have a special church family and an important facility in the centre of Etobicoke. Please continue your generous support both financially and by giving of your time and talents.

Financial Report.

Joanne Moilliet has prepared the following report and analysis of our financial results to the end of October, 2016. Results for the same year-to-date period in 2015 are also included below for comparison purposes.

As shown at right, as of the end of the October programming and operating expenditures were more than revenue amounts from various sources, resulting in an operating deficit of \$22,790; and a deficit of \$26,957 after recording an amount to account for depreciation on solar equipment.

We projected a year-to-date deficit of \$18,583 and our actual deficit is slightly greater than this amount, primarily due to payroll expenses being greater than projected, as a result of additional payroll costs associated with Rev. Mark's sabbatical. (We did not prefund the expense of Mark's sabbatical)

HUMBER VALLEY UNITED CHURCH

January – October

| | 2016 | 2015 |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Revenues | | |
| PAR Givings | \$162,262 | \$167,558 |
| Envelopes and Stock Donations | 95,572 | 114,486 |
| Use of Church | 129,251 | 105,174 |
| Trustees (includes Accrual) | 19,000 | 19,000 |
| Other (Loose Givings, Solar, etc) | 27,632 | 20,089 |
| Total Revenue | \$433,717 | \$426,307 |
| Expenditures | | |
| Payroll | \$308,185 | \$286,187 |
| Building Expenses | 48,130 | \$63,156 |
| Office | 22,268 | \$24,415 |
| Mission and Service | 7,804 | \$4,954 |
| Presbytery Assessment | 12,698 | \$12,610 |
| Music | 18,835 | \$18,241 |
| Stewardship and Finance | 23,281 | \$23,302 |
| Other Committees | 15,306 | \$6,093 |
| Total Expenditures | \$456,507 | \$438,958 |
| Operating Deficit | \$22,790 | \$12,651 |
| Solar Depreciation | 4,167 | 4,167 |
| Deficit | \$26,957 | \$16,818 |

Thank you for your ongoing support

Thank you for your ongoing financial support of Humber Valley United Church that includes your support to current year programming and church operations, to capital funds and special outreach projects.

Please continue to share your generosity in support of good stewardship. God gives it all and then calls us to share. It would be wonderful if we could finish the calendar year with a more positive financial position.

Stewardship for the Church is managing its resources and Stewardship individually for congregants is fulfilling our responsibilities to the Church to the best of our abilities.

Steve McCorquodale

Chair, Leadership Team

Fall Hike 2016

Our annual fall hike, scheduled for Oct 16, was rained out on that date. So disappointing for the many folks that came prepared for a great afternoon. Fortunately, we were able to reschedule for the following Sunday.

Fourteen of us, including Rev Irene and her husband, Lee, plus my 3 lb Chihuahua, Duke, headed out to Orangeville where we walked the Hockleycrest Loop part of the Bruce Trail. Janet McColeman scouted this great site for us. It was perfect timing as the stunning array of coloured leaves were at their peak, mostly still on the trees in the beautiful canopy above, but also some fallen under our feet, making that most satisfying crunching sound as we waded through them. Another part of the trail was

through thick pine trees where most of the needles had fallen, giving us a solid 2" cushion beneath our feet. Somehow, the needles absorb all noise, giving that eerie forest sound of silence. The diversity of terrain and tree type in our 1.5 hour walk kept it fast paced and very special.

I cannot imagine there is a soul alive who could deny the existence of God on a crisp fall day, walking through all His glory, His explosion of colour, His perfection in nature that simply can only be by divine design! If you stop in the midst of it all, and stand still, I swear you can feel God's embrace.

Andrea Ostvik - Van der Vliet



Three Bed Kits

While biking on my cottage road one beautiful summer morning, I met a man walking. We exchanged good mornings and he proceeded to tell me he had lost his cell phone. He said he had changed a flat tire on his car, had put the cell phone on the trunk of his car and then proceeded to drive to his cottage only to realize his mistake. No cell phone.

I told him I would look for it as I biked along the road. He had told me the distance he had travelled from where he changed the tire, so I went that distance one way with no results and turned around and continued looking on the other side of road until I met him again and then said I would continue looking as I biked back.

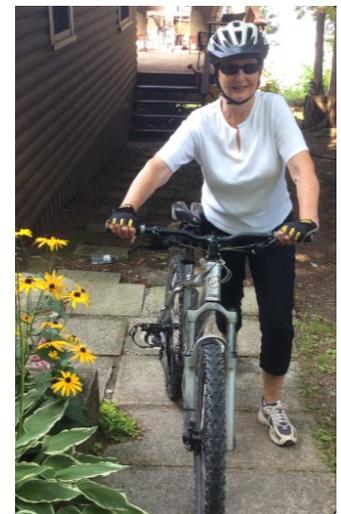
I travelled about another 1/2 mile when I found the cell phone in the grass on the side of the road. I put it in my back pocket and cycled back to him. I yelled to him I had found the phone and he was absolutely ecstatic and said he wanted to give me a reward. I said absolutely not and he kept insisting and I said no I would not accept a reward

and was only doing what any neighbour would do.

So then he said, "what is your favourite charity". I said "Sleeping Children Around the World". He reached into his pocket, pulled out a \$100.00 bill, and gave it to me. He said he belonged to a Rotary Club in Peterborough and they were just getting familiar with that charity.

I proceeded to tell him Humber Valley's history with Sleeping Children and told him I would purchase 3 bed kits with this money, which I did in his name and thanked him very much. I made his day and he made mine.

Ruth Johnston



Our Sponsors

We would like to thank our sponsors for their continuing support. The funds we receive for these ads help defray the costs of producing Connections. We encourage everyone to consider the services our sponsors provide.



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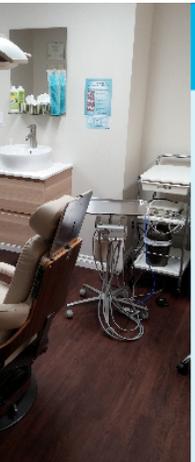
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I love the United Church of Canada (UCC). In 1996, I joined St. James United Church, in Etobicoke. Previous to that, I had been a member of the Anglican Church of Holy Trinity by the Eaton Centre. I joined St. James because Lee Holland (my spouse) and I and our two toddlers just moved to Etobicoke, and we found a church home in St. James: thriving Sunday School, good music program, and we appreciated the social justice emphasis in the sermons and the programs.

When I joined this local congregation, I also joined the larger church, which is the United Church of Canada. The UCC has four courts: national (also referred to as General Council), conference, presbytery and congregation.

Shortly after joining, I decided to begin discernment for ministry and was subsequently ordained in 2003 and placed at Davenport-Perth United Church and Community Ministry.

This is what I've learned: Without the Mission and Service Fund, the United Church as I know it would not exist.

The Mission and Service Fund, in a nutshell, is one central fund, funding the work of the United Church of Canada. Some of these resources are distributed to conferences and local ministries and some sent overseas through church partners. There are six main areas where M&S funds are allocated. Here is how I have experienced these resources at work.

Theological Education and Ministry Support: (8.9 % of M&S funds)

In order to be ordained, I needed to complete studies at a United Church theological school. I received a Masters of Theological Studies from Emmanuel College. Theological colleges like Emmanuel receive funding support from M&S.

Faith Formation: (27.9% of M&S funds)

"Gathering", produced quarterly by the national office, provides excellent weekly worship resources. When I needed help choosing a suitable Sunday school curriculum, I sought help from Amy Crawford, Faith Formation national staff person, who was extremely helpful. She also conducted a "Godly Play"

workshop for my congregation.

Community and Justice Work: (14.5% of M&S funds)

The South West Presbytery, of which Humber Valley is a part, supports two community ministries: Jane-Finch and Davenport-Perth. About 25% of the funds for these ministries come from the Mission and Service Fund. When I worked at Davenport-Perth, we worked with local residents and agencies to run a Reading program for children and to advocate for affordable housing.

Conference Leadership: (10.8% of M&S funds)

Conferences receive support from M&S to ensure consistent and necessary leadership staff in every conference across the UCC. The Toronto Conference staff include: Executive secretary Rev. David Allen, Personnel Minister Dale Hildebrand, Stewardship Officer Karen Seunarine. Karen provided advice and educational resources to Humber Valley on how to grow in our stewardship: sharing of God's gifts. When our congregation needed help on personnel matters or with hiring ministers, we have sought advice from Dale Hildebrand.

Global Mission and Service: (18.2% of M&S funds)

In 2012, as part of my sabbatical, I spent time visiting UCC partners in the Philippines. One of them was the Cordillera People's Alliance (CPA). CPA staff brought me to a community called Mankayan. Members of this Indigenous community had put up a barricade against the Lepanto mining company from further exploration and therefore expansion. The mining activities were hurting more than helping the community: polluting the air and river, leaving behind mine tailings ponds, and, violating workers' rights. The CPA stood in solidarity by assisting them with legal support and writing about their story, helping them defend their ancestral land. Partners like CPA help the UCC do justice and advocacy work with our Canadian people and government.

Support to Local Ministries: (19.7% of M&S funds)

From 2012, I initiated and worked with the Filipino Christian Fellowship (FCF), an outreach ministry of Northminster United Church where I served. By 2015, the FCF had grown and consequently applied to

and became a mission of the South West Presbytery. The FCF now receives funding from the UCC "New Ministries Fund". This funding allows them time to grow towards sustainability. If you are an existing congregation like Humber Valley, and need funds for renewal, you can apply from the "Embracing the Spirit" innovation fund.

Please join me in giving financially to the M&S and in sharing the good news stories of M&S.

"What we do together through Mission and Service, none of us could achieve alone."

Rev. Irene Ty

I am thankful for the support that M&S provides.

Mission & Service at a Glance 2016

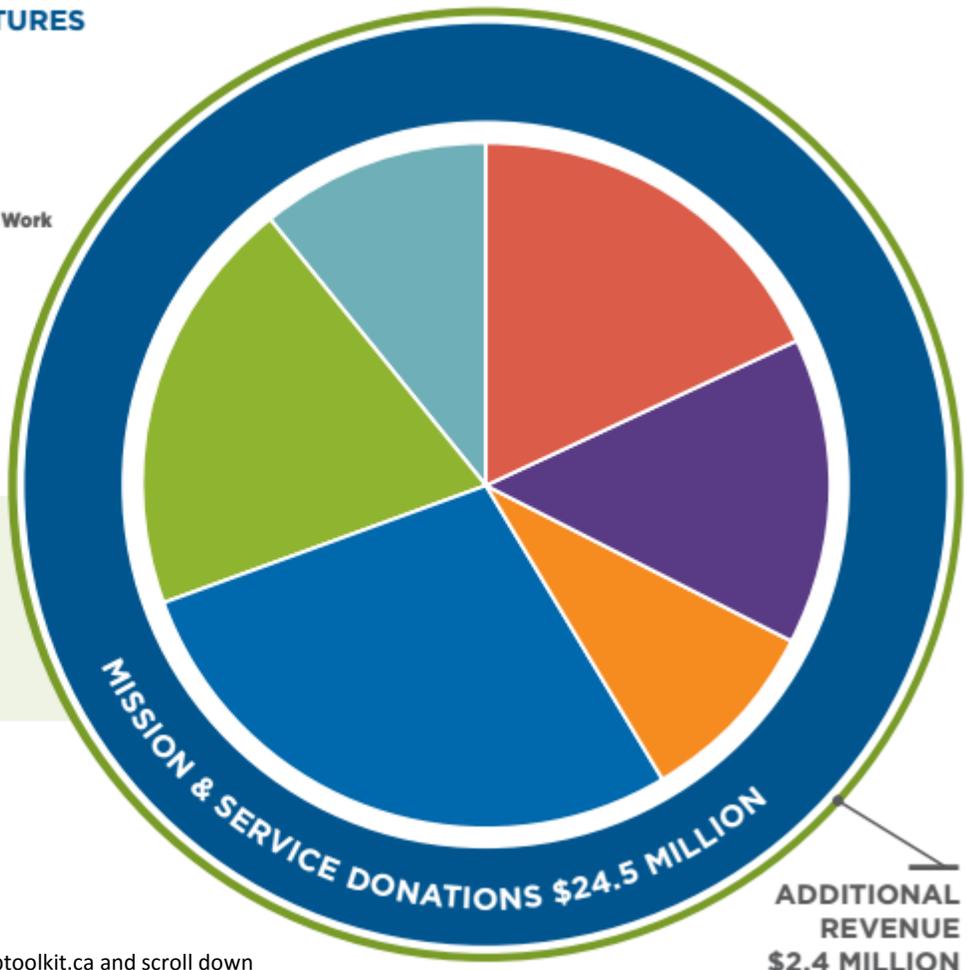
Generosity Funds Vital Mission & Service

- The pie chart shows how our generosity supports six program areas of Mission & Service work.
- The inner pie chart sections show where Mission & Service donations go. The outer ring shows where the funding for this work comes from.
- All Mission & Service giving is applied entirely to these six program areas.
- Mission and ministry priorities change from year to year, region to region.
- New this year is the Embracing the Spirit initiative to support innovation in communities of faith (pie 5)
- Expenditures in the six program areas include direct grants and program costs, including staff and support services. Support services required for program delivery include finance, information technology, human resources, legal, and communications.

BUDGETED 2016 MISSION & SERVICE REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES (\$26.9 MILLION)

- 1 Global Mission & Service**
\$4.9 million (\$3.1M grants)
- 2 Community and Justice Work**
\$3.9 million (\$1.9M grants)
- 3 Theological Education and Ministry Work**
\$2.4 million (\$1.7M grants)
- 4 Faith Formation**
\$7.5 million (\$0.4M grants)
- 5 Support to Local Ministries**
\$5.3 million (\$2.4M grants)
- 6 Conference Leadership**
\$2.9 million (\$2.8M grants)

TO SEE THE STORY of Mission & Service funding for Aboriginal ministries and the ongoing work of healing and reconciliation go to stewardshiptoolkit.ca



Source: United Church of Canada
 For the full report, please go to stewardshiptoolkit.ca and scroll down on the page and click "Mission and Service at a Glance".



Change is in the Air for the UCC

Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.

John F. Kennedy (1917-1963) Thirty-fifth President of the USA

The need to simplify the church organizational structure and reduce the cost of running the church in face of declining membership numbers was recognized at the 41st General Council, and 8 proposals (“Remits”) were approved at the 42nd General Council in 2015 to be remitted to the local churches and presbyteries for consideration and voting.

When our church was formed in 1925 with a combined total membership of 600,000, it became the most significant protestant church in Canada uniting the Methodist, Congregational, most of the Presbyterian, and Local Union churches. Parts of the structure were adopted from each of the constituent members, resulting in four tiers of government, from the Local Church (sometimes called Pastoral Care units), to the local grouping of churches (Presbyteries) to the regional Conferences, and up to the General Council. This was a very successful structure for its time.

While still the largest Protestant Christian denomination in Canada, the great upswing in membership during the 50’s and 60’s (peaking at 1.1 million in 1964) has since become a downswing with recent numbers showing 450,000 members and 2 million adherents.

Local church councils are charged with voting on Remits 1,2,3,4 (by June 2017) and 6 (by February 2018). These are all fundamental changes to the church changing the basis of union set out in the UCC ‘Manual’.

8 REMITS



These are the proposed changes:

Remit 1 – changes church structure from 4 “courts” or levels i.e. General Council + Conference + Presbytery + Pastoral Charge to 3 levels: “Denominational Council” + “Regional Councils” + “Communities of Faith”, effectively taking out a layer of government.

Remit 2 – replaces a system that is now rarely used in appointing ministers, and would require congregations to find their own ministers and ministers to find their own positions.

Remit 3 – a new Office of Vocation (education, admissions to Ministry, discipline) will be created at the General Council, increasing professionalism and disbanding numerous volunteer committees.

Remit 4 – would give General Council the right to assess local churches to cover the cost of governance and support (which it does not have now), allowing assessments across the church based on revenue. The expected assessment is 4.5% of revenues. The Presbyteries/Regional Council may also continue to/have the right to assess monies. At present there are more than 30 different funding formulas in place.

Remit 6 – provides for one order of ministers, made of up ordained, diaconal ministers, and designated lay ministers, allowing still for the continued identity of the ‘diakonia’ within the ordained ministry. This is intended to simplify the current situation. Currently there are 3,516 ordained ministers, 295 diaconal ministers, and 181 designated lay ministers in the UCC. HVUC does not have any ministers other than ordained ministers.

Information Sessions on Remits

Presbyteries will vote on all the 5 Remits above, as well as the following 3:

- Remit 5** – relates to mutual recognition of ministers from partner groups in Philippines, Korea, and USA.
- Remit 7** – proposes a new, more flexible path to become an ordained or diaconal minister.
- Remit 8** – simplifies the path to church membership, allowing pastoral charges to accept members.

Information sessions will be held at HVUC on the Remits – please come and participate:

Sunday November 20th, 2016

Gail Hamblin will introduce the Remit questions and the background for the proposed changes and a short video will be shown.

Sunday February 5th, 2017

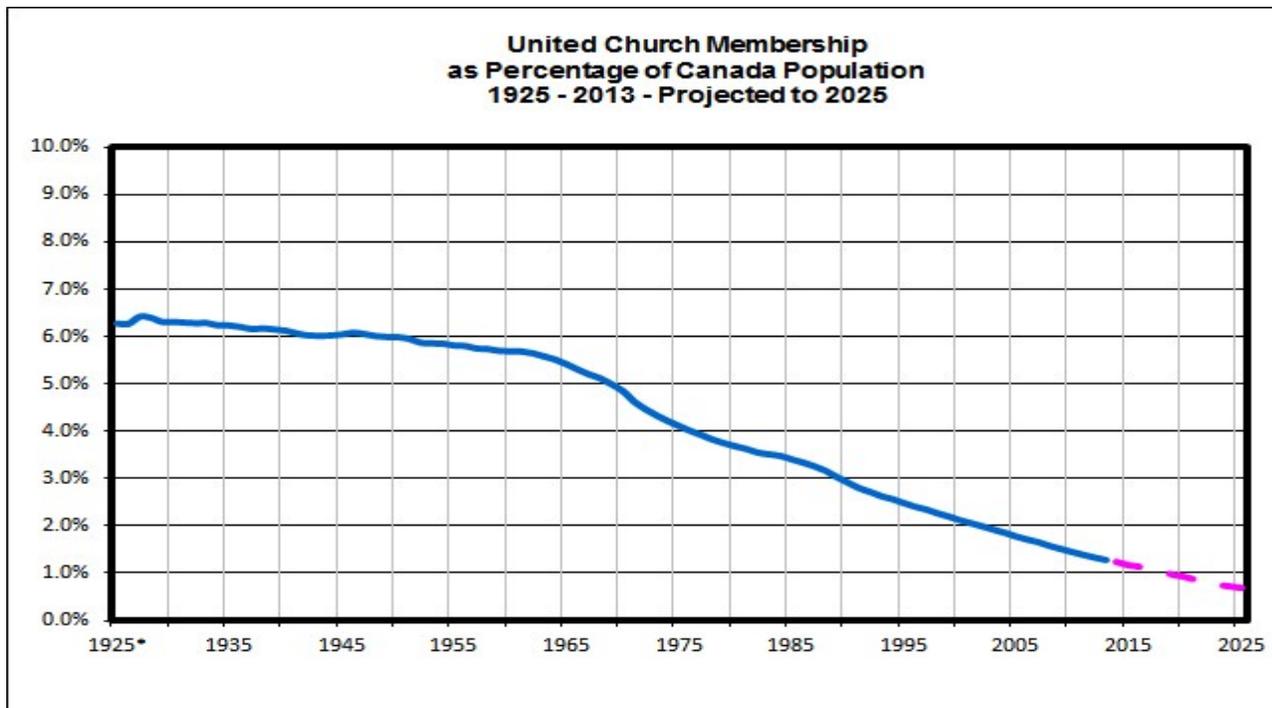
(TBC) - a slide show will be presented outlining each Remit.

Sunday February 26th, 2017

Lunch will be served after service and a resource person will be here to field our questions.

South West Presbytery will also hold information sessions **February 18th, and March 11th, 2017 9:30-11:30AM** at the Toronto Conference Office at 65 Mayall, North York (Jane and Sheppard).

Further information can be found at www.gc42.ca/remits .



Submitted by *Constance Crosby*

for the Remit Committee

Rev. Irene Ty, Bill Cahoon, Wilma Crago

Outreach projects

are an integral part of our church's mission.

A "TREE" on the bulletin board in the narthex shows the financial contributions made during 2016.

Capital Outreach funds from the 60th anniversary campaign allocated \$15,000 to be distributed to local, national and international projects. Generous contributions from individuals added greatly to this amount.

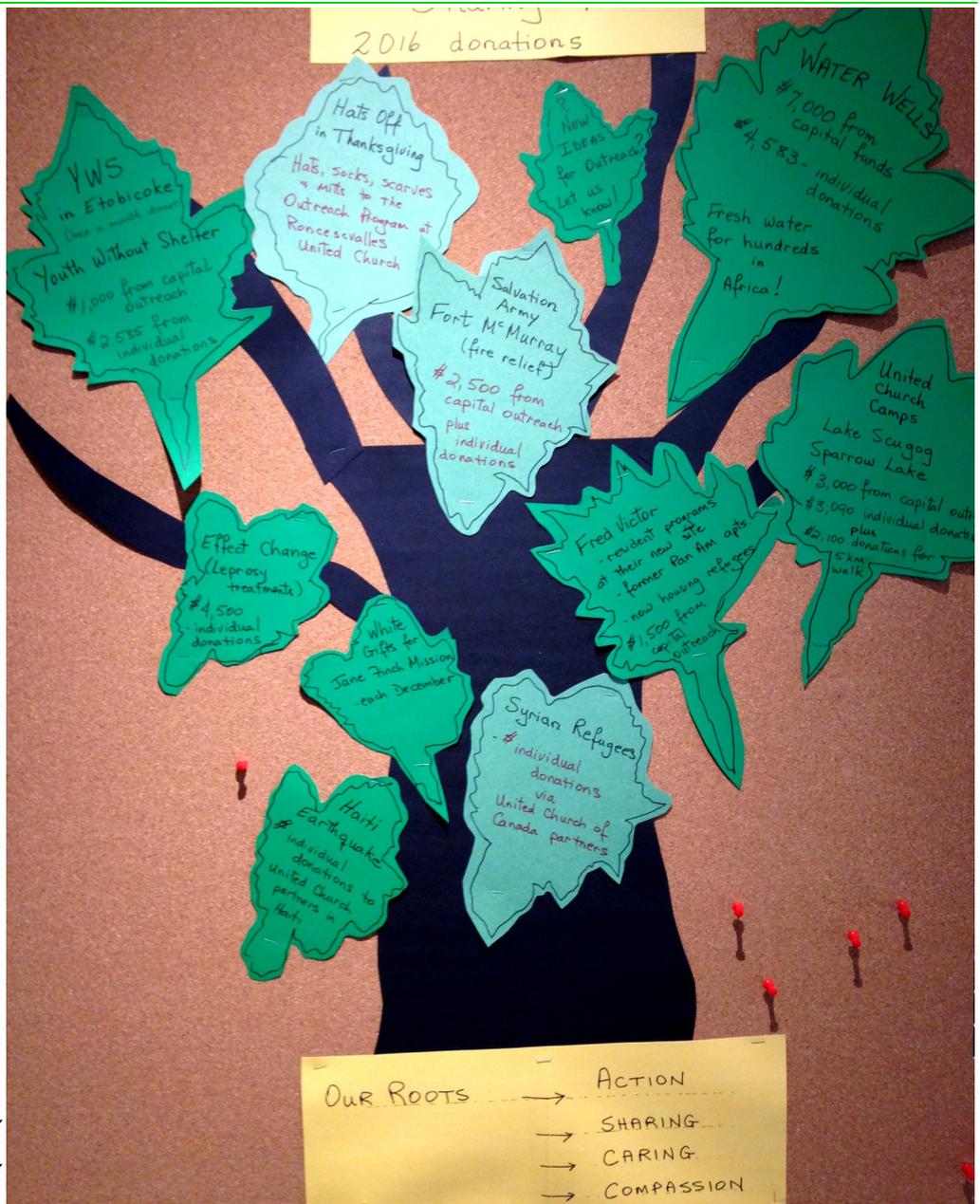
Check out the "Leaves" at right and on the board to learn how your support has been shared.

We are making a difference in the lives of many people and communities.

With thanks

from the

Outreach and Action Committee



Atheist in the Woods

An atheist was walking through the woods. "What majestic trees! 'What powerful rivers! What beautiful animals!" he said to himself. Suddenly, he heard a rustling in the bushes behind him. He turned to look and saw a 7-foot grizzly bear charge towards him. He ran as fast as he could along the path. He looked over his shoulder & saw that the bear was closing on him. He looked over his shoulder again, and the bear was even closer and then He tripped and fell. Rolling over to pick him-

self up, he found the bear was right on top of him ... reaching towards him with its left paw ... and raising the right paw to strike ... At that instant the Atheist cried out, 'Oh my God!' Time Stopped ... The bear froze ... The forest was silent ... A bright light shone upon the man, and a voice came out of the sky: "You deny my existence for all these years, you teach others I don't exist and even credit creation to cosmic accident. Do you expect me to help you out of this predicament? Am I to count you as a be-

liever?" The atheist looked directly into the light . "It would be hypocritical of me to suddenly ask you to treat me as a Christian now ... but perhaps you could make the BEAR a Christian?" ... a pause ... "Very well," said the voice. The light went out. The sounds of the forest resumed ...the bear dropped his right arm ... brought both paws together ... bowed his head & said: **Lord, bless this food, which I am about to receive. Amen."** Submitted by Cathy Wilkes

Dear Members of Humber Valley United Church:

Our congregation is now in the midst of exciting happenings in the area of lay caring ministry. We recently attended a week-long training course in Pittsburgh, where we learned how to implement the Stephen Series, a programme of lay caring ministry for the congregation. Our instructions included both how to train and supervise lay people in caring ministry.

Now we need to find men and women of our congregation who are willing to answer Jesus' call to serve as Stephen Ministers, beginning with 50 hours of stimulating and useful training in Christian caring skills. This training will be led by trained Stephen Leaders and will include a variety of topics such as listening, Christian assertiveness, maintaining boundaries in caregiving, and grief. The training is distinctively Christian and focuses on God as the one who cures as we care.

When the Stephen Ministers have completed their training, they will be commissioned and ready to begin their ministry. Working under supervision, these Stephen Ministers will be available to meet weekly with people experiencing such problems as these, and many more.

- Bereavement
- Terminal illness
- Single parenting
- Long-term hospitalization
- Job loss
- Natural Disasters

Stephen Ministers commit to at least two years for training, service, and regular supervision. Many Stephen Ministers enjoy their ministry so much that they choose to serve beyond the two years.

While being a Stephen Minister requires commitment of time and effort, it also brings joy and fulfillment. It may be one of the most rewarding challenges you will ever embrace. In addition, you will use the skills you learn not only in your caring ministry, but also in your everyday relationships with family, friends, neighbours, and coworkers.

Think and pray about this opportunity. If you decide you would like to be a Stephen Minister, please contact one of us right away and we can talk about how you can get started. If we agree that you would be well-suited to be a Stephen Minister, you will then begin training for this exciting ministry at our next session beginning in the spring of 2017.

We are excited to see what God is going to do to the lives of those who undertake this ministry and in the lives of those who will receive care from our Stephen Ministers.

Yours in Christ,

Your Stephen Leader Team

Joanne Stenerson

Juanita Macpherson

Lynn Manning

Mary Moffat Johannson

P.S. You will also grow spiritually when you serve as a Stephen Minister. When God calls you to service, he also gives you the faith and the gifts you need to do his will.



A Tale of Two Weddings

The first week of October 2016 was a very busy one for the Ireland family. Our 30 year old son, Stephen, was married after a 12 year courtship to a beautiful, warm, smart, talented woman named Manali Pradhan. Stephen and Manali met in grade 12 at ECI and, after many more years of school and professional training, felt it was time to formally and legally marry. Stephen was brought up attending Humber Valley United Church and the Christian traditions, while Manali was born and lived in Mumbai, India for her first 10 years and was raised with Hindu traditions. Over the years, our two families have shared many joyous celebrations and parties, weddings, births, deaths, illnesses, vacations, and casual time.

With the Bride and Groom, our two households planned a way to honour our religious and cultural traditions and share them with family and friends over seven days. Manali's sister, Nehal, was asked to be the Bride's Maid of Honour and our daughter, Jennifer, was the the Groom's Best Woman; they both had roles to play in every event. Sunday was Haldi - a women-only Maharastrian celebration offering blessings and symbolic preparation of the bride and groom with turmeric and sandalwood for their upcoming wedding. We wore spectacular heavy silk sarees in brilliant colours and woven gold threads in special patterns.



Monday was a Christian Vow Ceremony, where Manali wore a flowing white wedding gown, and 30 family members were in their best gowns and suits. Rev. Don Gibson officiated and my mother, Margaret Agar, was able to attend and represented that generation for both families. Tuesday evening was Mehndi where women in the bridal party were adorned with intricate patterns of henna on their hands. Wednesday was a Mehndi party for extended family, neighbours, and friends at an Indian buffet restaurant where all the women had henna patterns applied to their hands. The dress code was party wear.... Western

or Indian and the evening included delicious food and even Bollywood dance instruction! Friday, we travelled north of Toronto to an event venue where we participated in the Hindu ceremony with very meaningful promises and blessings explained by the priest, and Stephen and Manali were then officially married - the register signed and witnessed. Then it was dinner, speeches and dancing. Saturday our families entertained visiting relatives and friends who had travelled to be a part of this wonderful event. We all felt Stephen and Manali were well and truly married and that our two families were now blended into one.... the "Pralands".

At Humber Valley's UCW Royal Tea in honour of Queen Elizabeth's 90th birthday held last Spring, Mona, Manali's mother and I were telling the ladies at our table about the wedding plans and especially about the spectacular outfits that were being created. Such interest was expressed that I suggested that Mona return and we bring our special sarees and share their beauty with others. On Tuesday, November 1, Mona and Nehal, Manali's sister, joined by members of our UCW Unit 6 and other ladies watched demonstrations of saree "draping" and had the opportunity to try some on themselves, as well as learn about saree styles and traditions. Mona and Nehal were our gracious and talented teachers and models, and as Reverend Irene has documented and shared, a colourful and fun time was had by all.



We often have the opportunity to observe other religious and cultural traditions in our communities, but seldom do we fully participate and understand the significance of these as part of a family. The "Pralands" feel that through the marriage of our children, our families have been truly blessed

Catherine Ireland

Ladies' Night Out

*They came, they partied, they bought,
 they ate, they bid, they were inspired!*

A sell-out crowd of women enjoyed a great evening of food, fun, fellowship...and purses!!! on Wednesday, October 26th. A good time was had by all. And we raised over \$9,000 for UCW charitable projects.

Thanks to everyone who helped make this possible, particularly the team of volunteers who baked, cooked, served, sold tickets, set-up the rooms, manned the bake sale and auction tables, poured wine, cleaned up, donated purses, solicited sponsors and a host of other jobs, under the able direction of 'LADIES' NIGHT OUT' Co-ordinator, Diane Locke.

Special thanks to our live auctioneers, Allan Orr and his sidekick, Fred Torrie. Thanks to all the donors to our Bake Sale and Silent Auction tables.

The following businesses supported us with sponsorship dollars. Please support them when possible: Beau-lieu Vision Care, Chartwell Scarlett Heights, Daytech, Dineen Construction Corporation, Kingsway Village Custom Homes, Mariposa Cruises, Paragon Printing, Thornbrook Home Care, Turner & Porter, Casual Affairs Clothing, Farquhar Advantage Real Estate, The Gem Gallery, Westmount Gallery Ltd., Ken Shaw Lexus, Network I.T. Solutions, Jennifer Hair Design, More Than Pies, Royal Spa by Monica, The Singing Lady, and Tartistry.

Let's see what fun we can have next year!



Talent Galour

More than 120 attended the dinner and talent show with 17 acts to entertain including: songs and dances from the Filipok School, Lauren, Blake, Katie, Kyra, Grace, Linnea, Rev. Irene Ty; clarinet playing by Amy; baton twirling by Emily ; piano playing by Myrna and Paul; HVUC Fitness dance featuring George (Jane Fonda), Bill (Richard Simmons) and the back-up dancers (Deb, Andrea, Michelle C. and Judy); and a surprise visit by Donald and Hillary.

Many thanks to all of those who helped in any way. This turned out to be a true community event and a fun-filled evening of good food, fellowship and entertainment.



View video of Hillary (Deb) and Donald (Bill) at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DkRZurDibEs>





**Jewels
of Christmas**

**Humber Valley United Church
Friday December 16 at 7:30 pm**

**Chancel Choir, Soloists and Junior Choir
Virginia Hatfield, Joni Henson and Megan Latham**

Christmas Carols with the Congregation
Freewill Offering Refreshments served after the concert

The Chancel Choir is continuing to thrive in preparation for Advent and Christmas. We have about 25 members who donate their time and talent, rehearsing on Thursday evenings and singing on Sunday mornings.

We are blessed to have wonderful soloists/section leaders: Jill Fillion, Joni Henson, Nicole Percifield, Devin Herbert, Rob Kempson, and David Kingsmill. Since early September, we have been rehearsing "Jewels of Christmas", our concert to be presented on Friday, December 16th at 7:30 pm. It will feature the Chancel Choir, Soloists, the Junior Choir and special guests Virginia Hatfield and Megan Latham, both friends of Joni Henson. Virginia, Joni and Megan will sing selections from their CD "Christmas at Casa Diva". They will be accompanied by Andrea Grant. The Chancel Choir will perform "Tapestry of Light: A Celtic Christmas Celebration" by Joseph M Mar-

tin. There will be Christmas Carols for congregational singing and a freewill offering. Refreshments will be served after the concert. Please bring your family and friends. All are welcome!

Both the Chancel Choir and the Handbell Ensemble will be present at the 10:30 am Advent Service on Sunday, December 18th and on Christmas Eve at the 10:00 pm Service. The choir will sing on Sunday morning at the 10:30 am Christmas Day Service.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas!!!
Many thanks and blessings,

Paul Chant
Minister of Music



Saturday December 3 at 8 pm

The Ontario Pops
PRESENTS...
Holiday Sing-A-Long Concert

Silent Auction at 7 pm
Etobicoke Centennial Choir
Andrea Rebello soloist
Carlos Bastidos conductor
Tickets \$20 at the door
Humber Valley United Church

ADVENT and CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICES

Celebrate Christmas at Humber Valley United Church.

10:30 am SUNDAYS

Nov. 27: Advent 1: Daring to Hope. Communion.
Dec. 4: Advent 2: Daring for Peace, White Gifts Sunday
Dec. 11: Advent 3: Daring for Joy
Dec. 18: Advent 4: Daring to Love, Liturgical Dance and Handbell choir
Dec. 25: Christmas: Happy Birthday Jesus!
Jan. 1, 2017: A Service to Welcome the Beginning of the New Year
Jan. 8, 2017: Epiphany: Welcoming the Light

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES: Saturday, Dec. 24, 2016

5:30 pm Family Service:

The Christmas nativity story comes alive through story and song.

Arrive by 5 pm to take part in the Children and Youth Christmas pageant.

10:00 pm Candlelight Communion Service

Cider and Christmas cake will be served from 9:15 pm

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

Sunday December 25, 10:30 am Christ is born!

SPECIAL SERVICES

Wed. Dec. 14: 7:30 pm

Service of Comfort and Joy: for those who find it difficult during this Christmas season.

Friday, Dec. 16: 7:30 pm

Jewels of Christmas Concert, Featuring Chancel and Junior Choirs



Humber Valley United
the friendly community church

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