

The Harcourt Herald

*The life and work of the Harcourt Memorial United Church
Guelph, Ontario Canada
February, 2017*



**Through the Crystal Ball:
A Glimpse at the Future of Religion**

Harcourt Memorial United Church

An Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Canada

We are a people of God called together and sent forth by Christ to

Seek / Connect / Act

Our Mission:

Inspired by the Spirit, we participate in Christian practices that strengthen us in the building of just, compassionate, and non-violent relationships

Our Vision Statement:

To be an authentic community of spiritual growth and service

Our Core Values:

Risk...Respect...Responsibility...Vulnerability...Trust

Our Purpose:

To welcome and strengthen in community all who wish to serve God and follow the way of Jesus

Harcourt Memorial United Church

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The Harcourt Herald

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by the

Communications Committee

Your contributions are welcome!

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The Ministers' Quill

by Miriam Flynn

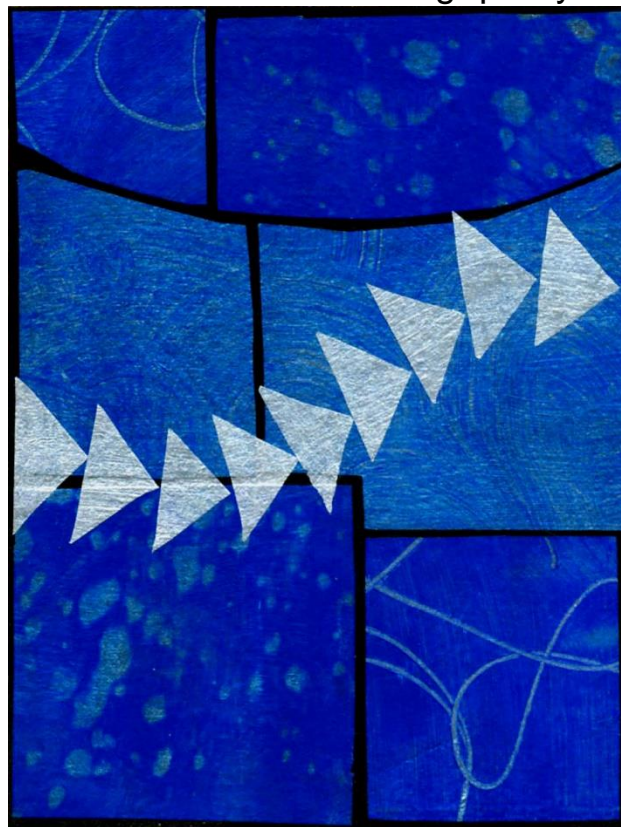


CH-CH-CH-Changes

As a teenager, my friends and I listened to the music of David Bowie. I remember a catchy song in which he stuttered out the word “*Ch-ch-ch-changes!*” The song included the prophetic verse, “Look out you rock ‘n’ rollers... pretty soon now you’re going to get older.” Of course, change is an inevitable part of life and aging is only part of it.

That we *can change* and adapt to external conditions is an amazing quality of human resilience. The capacity to be initiators of change in our own lives, relationships and the wider world is both a gift to people of faith and a responsibility we are called to live out. Some would say, the way we exercise that agency defines us as ethical and spiritual people.

But change is not always easy for us. Indeed, it can be uncomfortable or even painful -- because real change is not only about reaching out, but also letting go. It may entail loss or self-sacrifice and by definition means dislocation – stepping outside the comfort zone of the familiar. For this reason we often avoid change or focus on the change we’d like to see in others – seeking the security that comes when there is conformity with our own views, values and priorities.



In a time of rapid societal change, we in the church frequently find ourselves engaged in reflection and discernment on the subject of change. As the Harcourt community envisions its future through the 20/20 process, the subject of change comes up again and again.

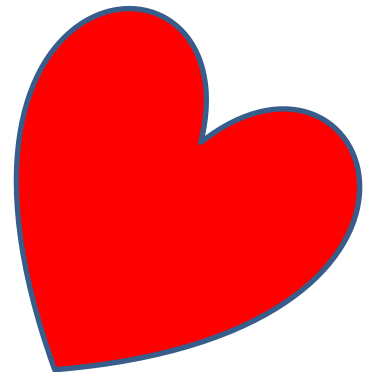
Water and the Spirit
by Jan Richardson
Used with permission

That's fitting, because the *promise* of transformative change and the hope that it brings is at the core of our faith tradition. The divine promise spoken through the prophet Ezekiel is that we shall be given "a new heart and a new spirit." (Ezekiel 36:26) In the words of the apostle Paul, we become new creations in Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

As a church living out our call, in this time and place, it may be useful to think of the church, not as *a place*, but *a pathway*. Theologian Harvey Cox reminds us that the early church was not an organization unified by hierarchy or creed but by the confidence that they shared the same spirit and were all engaged in the same enterprise of following Jesus and making the unique message of God's reign of shalom known to the world. Church was not a place, but a community. Faith was not a creed but a primary orientation of life. Central to that orientation is the conviction that people *can change* and need not be conformed to the world as it is, but can be "light" and "salt" – movers and shakers, working together to further God's *kin-dom* in our own time and place.

Change ... is not always easy, but it is part of movement of the Spirit we are called to embrace as people of faith.

Caroline Harcourt Women's Fellowship
February 13th at 11:45



Harcourt Men's Group Meeting - Wednesday, February 8th. Jock Rutherford will give an illustrated talk about his experience: "From Prague to Gibraltar by Motorcycle". All men are welcome to attend and you are invited to bring a friend or a neighbour who would enjoy this session. Malcolm Coutts will have the coffee and tea ready at 7:45 a.m., the meeting will begin at 8:00 a.m. Bill Lord will be leading this meeting.

Council News

by Lorraine Holding, Chair of Council

Our January 18th Council meeting focused on aspects of ministry and administration. Peter Gill (Chair) and Mary Davis (Fundraising Consultant) provided an update on the Chalmers Community Services Centre's (CCSC) progress towards their planned relocation, programs, and fundraising campaign. CCSC will move to 41 MacDonnell Street by April 1. We will hear more about their fundraising campaign by spring. Flowing from the Congregation's approval of the Joint Needs Assessment Report, Ministry & Personnel Committee (M&P) has worked to finalize the job description for the shared and equal positions of *Minister for Worship, Pastoral Care, Christian Formation and Justice & Outreach*. After discussion to include 'agent of change' as a responsibility, Council approved the job description. M&P continues to work on the staffing model and will provide more information prior to budget discussions. Kent Hoeg announced that our 2016 fiscal year ended with a small surplus. We are very grateful for the Congregation's generosity to meet the stewardship challenge during December. Finance Committee will host an information session about the proposed 2017 budget on February 5 in the Chapel following the 10:30 a.m. services. This opportunity provides time to listen and ask questions prior to the Annual Meeting. Our Congregational Annual Meeting is on February 26, 11:45 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. in the gym. Snacks and child care will be provided. We encourage you to attend! It is our time to reflect on our accomplishments of 2016, and to continue our Harcourt 20/20 journey into its next phase. Recruitment to fill Council vacancies (Vice Chair and Councilor for Congregational Life) and confirmation of committee/team memberships require focus this month. Please consider how you can contribute your gifts of talent and time, and let us know of your interest.

Over the coming months, Council will consider the five remits (proposals) from General Council 42 as an important part of improving how we do God's work. As designated by the United Church of Canada, Council will vote on each remit on behalf of our Congregation. We will study and discuss: (1) Three-Council Model; (2) Elimination of Transfer and Settlement; (3) Office of Vocation; (4) Funding a New Model; (6) One Order of Ministry.

Our year ahead will provide continued opportunities to challenge ourselves and shape our life, mission and ministry as a community of faith. May we seek God's guidance and listen for the Spirit each day. With faith and hope.

New to Harcourt? Welcome!

Harcourt is a diverse community that welcomes everyone.

Listen to what some people are saying about their experiences here. Press and hold the ctrl button on your computer and click your mouse on the photos to view the videos online.



To contact the Church:
Office e-mail
office@harcourtuc.ca or
call 519 824-4177

Visit our webpage at
www.harcourtuc.ca
for information about
services, supports, room
rental, activities and
outreach

People are Talking About...



- **United Church Moderator Reflects on Loving Trump.**

Rev. Jordan Cantwell reflects on why she loves Donald Trump.

<http://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/united-church-moderator-reflects-on-loving-donald-trump-610964115.html>

- **Castlegar United Church in British Columbia starts “Unchurch” Program.**

The Minister of Castlegar United Church, Rev. Powell said “Sunday morning church doesn’t work for a lot of people for a lot of different reasons. But people are still looking for a way to either do their spiritual practice or ask questions of a deeper nature than we normally get into in conversations.

The year-long program started in January and will run until November.

<http://www.castlegarnews.com/community/411541625.html>

- **Union Point United Church Near Winnipeg: A Historic Gem That Has Been Saved.**

Union Point United church was built in 1887 in a small town called Union Point, located just south of Ste. Agathe, Manitoba. A sandbar in the nearby Red River made it a prime docking point for steamboats carrying cargo and travelers.

Guess who looks after it now? <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/union-point-church-manitoba-1.3926647>

- **How the Mary Tyler Moore Show Battled Anti-Semitism.**

Remember Rohoda? How about the funeral of Chuckles the Clown? Mary Tyler Moore’s recent passing helps us to reflect on a show that often shone a light on discrimination against the Jews – even though in real life Mary was not Jewish.

<http://religionnews.com/2017/01/25/mary-tyler-moore-death-dead/>

Committee and Group News

Great Reads for Your Valentine (And For You!)

by Mary-Lou Funston

For the month of February the theme for consideration is the Sermon on the Mount – The Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 5. The books chosen this month are not specifically related to Matthew 5, but the contents do relate to the different emphases of the Sermon on the Mount. So...if you want to do some deeper thinking about the passages, please have a look at these volumes and share them with your valentine.



The Heart of Christianity – Rediscovering a Life of Faith

Marcus Borg 230 BOR

Some chapter headings: 1. The Heart of Christianity in a Time of Change; 3. Faith the Way of the Heart; 7. The Kingdom of God The Heart of Justice



Practicing Peace – A Devotional Walk Through the Quaker Tradition

Catherine Whitmire 248 WHI

“Introduces the Quaker tradition of peacemaking and applies it to everyday situations.” Each chapter is composed of a series of short, thought-provoking quotations, ending with a series of thought-provoking queries. It is easy to read, but challenging to think about.



Through the Woods – Making Sense of Your Spiritual Path

J. Clark Saunders 248 SAU

Some chapter headings: 2. Forbidden Fruit: The Woods and the Loss of Innocence. 5. A Clearing in the Forest: Discernment in Times of Transition 6. Lions and Tigers, and Big Bad Wolves: The Faces of Fear 10. The Sacred Grove Finding Healing in the Woods. As in the Quaker volume, each chapter ends with a series of thought provoking questions.



Spiritual Quest – Stories from Life

Culbertson & MacFarlane eds 248.4 CUL

This volume, produced by the United Church of Canada, is “a collection of personal stories and poems (that) will help readers discover God at work...” It is divided into 4 sections: Setting Out, Journeying Together, In Transit, and Final Passages. Each section has reflections written by different people. Two of the contributors are Andrea Buttars and Jean Little. YOU may well recognize others!

A Tender Call

by Dave Hume, Chair, Washroom Building Committee

The new news is the architect expects to send a call for tenders out this coming week. There are only a couple of outstanding items left to nail down. We have been trying to get quotes on running a sanitary sewer straight out to Dean Avenue from the cloakroom or, conversely, to run a sewer line through the boiler room and hooking into the existing sanitary sewer on the west side of the church. The decision was made to go straight to the street. We are adding specifications for grading and seeding after the sanitary sewer is completed, to establish a water trap (read create a grassed ditch) so the rain off the roof doesn't accumulate on the main sidewalk. When that's done, the call for tenders will go out. It looks like construction will start after Easter. Special thanks to Lisa McTaggart for offering to help with the landscape design.

Our 'Petal Power' Crew

by Ann Middleton, Chair, Chancel Guild

Meet the flower and fabric ladies! The Chancel Guild looks after providing flowers very Sunday courtesy of Marta Coutts, Norma Fear, Carol Jones, Ann Middleton, Marty Ragetlie and Janet Webster. Anne Piper (with the help of Darko and a very long ladder) is responsible for changing the fabric on the crosses in the sanctuary and chapel to coincide with the church colours throughout the year. From now until Ash Wednesday we are in what is described in the church calendar as Ordinary Time (green).

From Ash Wednesday until Good Friday, the fabric on the cross will be purple with a change to black for Good Friday and Saturday, then on to white for the Season of Easter.

Easter flowers:

We will be buying hydrangeas and probably azaleas again to decorate the church for Easter. If you would like to remember a relative or friend or celebrate a special occasion at any time of year with flowers, please contact Ann Middleton for more information.





*Want a night to get out of the kitchen and
not have to decide what is for dinner?*

Manna is hosting a

Pancake Supper

on Shrove Tuesday, February 28th at 6 PM
at Harcourt Church

Come and enjoy fellowship and good food;
Plain, blueberry or chocolate chip pancakes, juice, tea or coffee, sausage or bacon,
and real maple syrup!

After the costs of the food have been covered, all extra funds will go

In support of Chalmers Community Services

Guelph Ecumenical Week of Guided Prayer and Spiritual Exploration

Schedule

Opening event: Sunday Feb. 26, 1.30 to 3.30 p.m.

Location: in Guelph, to be announced

Closing event: Saturday March 4, 9.30 to 11 a.m.

Location: in Guelph, to be announced

Daily: meetings with your guide at a mutually convenient time and place

Guided Prayer and Spiritual Exploration

The Week is an opportunity for people to learn more about prayer and explore their spirituality. This offering is an experiential event. Guided prayer and spiritual exploration are not reading about God, but developing, deepening and exploring a relationship with God. Listening, reflection and awareness are at the heart of this week. During the week you will be paired with an experienced guide, with whom you will meet daily for about 30 minutes. Your guide will give you scripture passages, texts (poems, stories), art activities and/or meditations to explore and/or pray with. Each day you will share your experience, and experiment with specific ways to meet God meaningfully.

The Week of Guided Prayer and Spiritual Exploration is a gift you give to yourself and God.



To register please fill out the back of this page as completely as possible to help us match you with a guide. This information will be shared with the administrative team and your guide.

Submit this form and \$35.00 to The Guelph Ecumenical Guild by **February 19**. Since we do not wish finances to be a barrier, grants are available if needed.

Please note: You must be registered in advance in order to participate. There are a limited number of spaces, and we give priority to first-time retreatants.

Payment Options

Online at www.guidedprayer.webs.com

By cheque:

\$35.00 payable to The Guelph Ecumenical Guild

Mail to The Guelph Ecumenical Guild

c/o Margaret Turner, 517 Maltby Road E., Puslinch ON N0B 2J0

For more information please visit our website www.guidedprayer.webs.com or call April Snider at 519-766-9316

Registration Form

Date registration was received: _____
(for office use only)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Have you had any form of guided prayer before? _____

If yes, please describe: _____

Please describe your current spiritual practices (if any):

Would you like to be included in our email list for event offerings?

No ☐ Yes ☐ _____

We will attempt to accommodate your preferences.

For one-to-one meetings with my guide, I prefer:

Mornings ☐ Afternoons ☐ Evenings ☐ Anytime ☐

I prefer a guide who is a:

Woman ☐ Man ☐ No preference ☐

Do you have allergies to pets and other things (i.e. candles)?

No ☐ Yes ☐ please specify: _____

Do you have a church or religious affiliation?



Guelph Ecumenical Week of Guided Prayer and Spiritual Exploration

Feb. 26 to March 4, 2017

**Presented by the Guelph Ecumenical Guild
of Ignatian Spiritual Direction**

Information and Registration

Community News

JESUS LOVES ME (Senior's Version)

(Used with Permission)
Submitted by Ben Fear

Jesus loves me, this I know,
Though my hair is white as snow
Though my sight is growing dim,
Still He bids me trust in Him.

(Chorus)

YES, JESUS LOVES ME..
YES, JESUS LOVES ME..
YES, JESUS LOVES ME,
THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO.

Though my steps are oh, so slow,
With my hand in His I'll go
On through life, let come what may,
He'll be there to lead the way.

(Chorus)

When the nights are dark and long,
In my heart He puts a song
Telling me in words so clear,
(Chorus)

When my work on earth is done,
And life's victories have been won,
He will take me home above,
Then I'll understand His love.
(Chorus)

I love Jesus, does He know?
Have I ever told Him so?
Jesus loves to hear me say,
That I love Him every day.
(Chorus)

Eureka!

by Ann Estill

The snow had begun in the evening and busily fell all the night. T'was piling field and highway with a silence deep and white. Son Jim, who always was first of our four boys to volunteer to shovel the driveway, had an idea. He borrowed some shovels, picked up four refugee people and ran an ad hoc business for six hours of snow shoveling. Since he was the one speaking English, he arranged with the homeowners.

The refugee people pitched in and worked at a feverish pace, no doubt hoping it would help them keep warm. One homeowner, after agreeing to have his driveway done, wondered if the whole group would like to come in for lunch.

And Eureka! There it was...chili, homemade bread and hot chocolate. Guelph hospitality at its finest... and each refugee took home a nice sum of hard-earned cash in the bargain.



The Back Pew - Jeff Larson

I hope you like this romantic candle that I formed from my own earwax collection over the last 13 years.



Not since the writing of Song of Solomon has a man expressed his love in such a personal way.

Contact

Chalmers Community Services—a significant presence in Guelph

Chalmers Community Services Centre (CCSC) in Guelph has been serving the city's most vulnerable citizens for the past twenty years. When it opened its doors at Chalmers United Church in 1997, the programme committed to offering food, clothing and a hot meal on Saturday nights with no means testing or other barriers to access to those services.

Since its inception in 1997, CCSC has grown to be a significant agency assisting those in need. What started as an individual church initiative has grown into a broad community-based operation with its roots and much of its support still coming from the Guelph and area United Churches.

Food has continued to be the primary service. Guests can come every two weeks to receive 2-3 days of food.

Nutritional value has always been high on the agenda and so a registered dietitian was able to advise on the optimum amount of fresh produce, protein, dairy and other food groups that Chalmers could offer. A commitment to a balanced food basket is an expensive proposition—over half of CCSC's operating budget goes to food purchases even though the community

generously supports the agency with numerous food donations.



In 2016 Chalmers will register approximately 11,000 guest visits to its two locations, one in the downtown of Guelph on Baker Street and the other on the grounds of Three Willows United Church in the west end. This number is almost exactly double the number, 5704, who registered in 2013, speaking to the growing need in Guelph.

While food is a critical part of the operation, clothing and household items such as bedding, small



appliances, and dishes are very much in demand. In addition, a unique service offered at both locations is a mending service where guests can get coat zippers replaced or pants hemmed or even sleeping bags and tents fixed.



A guest survey was carried out a couple of years ago that revealed an additional need for more social time and so the downtown location now opens two mornings a week where guests can come for coffee, sandwiches, conversation, or quiet time. In addition, a visitor will see several people grouped around a large jigsaw puzzle as guests and volunteers work together gradually assembling the latest puzzle, which is then glued together and given away. Three Willows Church is also open for coffee on one morning per week.

CCSC was blessed to receive some funds from the sale of Paisley United Church and so two years ago the Chalmers board elected to create a microfinance programme. This programme has now been running for a year and clients of Ontario Works who wish to create a more self-sufficient financial future can apply for a loan through the Meridian Credit Union and begin the journey towards that future. Still in its infancy, this potentially transformative initiative gives people the opportunity to secure a positive credit rating as well as establish financial self-sufficiency.

Of course none of the work being done at Chalmers would be possible without the incredible dedication of two part-time staff together with about ninety volunteers who sit on the board, serve in the food pantries, help guests with clothing, mend, serve coffee, shop, stock shelves, fundraise, and many other tasks.

CCSC is now embarking on perhaps the most exciting period in its history. Earlier in 2016, Chalmers entered into an agreement to co-purchase a late nineteenth-century building in the heart

of downtown Guelph on Carden Street opposite the new city hall. The building is undergoing extensive renovations and it is expected to be ready for move-in later this winter. We are now in the early phase of a capital campaign where we will be seeking financial support from the United Churches in the area as well as the other many churches together with businesses and individuals in Guelph and beyond.

The new location will give Chalmers much more visibility in the community and perhaps give that community a closer view of the pressing issue of poverty in the city of Guelph. Our own space will also afford us the opportunity to partner with other organizations to offer creative and innovative programmes that may go some way to fulfilling our mission— “to advocate for and deliver practical and meaningful programmes that empower guests to improve their lives.”

As we endeavour to put our faith into action, we are deeply appreciative of the support and encouragement we receive from all levels of the United Church from the national office, Hamilton Conference, and Waterloo Presbytery as well as our United Church partners both in Guelph and beyond.



Important News from Chalmers

by Peter Gill

Renovations at **42 Carden Street**, the soon to be new home of Chalmers Community Services Centre are in the home stretch. CCSC will be kicking off it Capital Campaign at Harcourt within the next month. Stay tuned for more information. Thank you, Harcourt members, for you wonderful support.

Sacred Circle Dance at Harcourt Memorial

by Marnie Allen

What is a Spiritual Practice to you?

In my life I have been intentional about leaving myself open to noticing new possibilities. My Spiritual Practices change - some ebb and flow and some I try out until they no longer work for me.

One of my current "Spiritual Practices" is taking part in the Sacred Circle Dance offering in the Harcourt Gymnasium on the second Saturday of the month from 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M. This practice started many years ago at Findhorn, Scotland and has spread worldwide. It is very active in our area.

Our sessions are facilitated in Guelph by Shoshona Magill and Audrey Fife. The dance is done by connecting ourselves, holding hands and forming a circle. The process is meditative and incorporates a theme, some history, and wonderful music. Leonard Cohen is one of our favourites. The purpose is to move our bodies, to be in the moment, enjoy beautiful music, and connect in community.

I would like to invite anyone open to checking out what I experience as a wonderful "Spiritual Practice" in my life. The Group is open to our congregation and we are looking forward to welcoming you.

This is what Sacred Circle Dance means to one of our regular participants:

"When I dance I feel connected to all that is. It is about being part of a diverse community. Dance is healing, energizing, meditative, and feeds my soul as well as the whole of who I am in the world. I have been part of the sacred dance community for over 25 years. It has been and is a community that has supported and held me as I grew and evolved with kindness, gentleness and laughter." SM

2017 Winegard Visiting Lectureship on International Development



Politics, Sexuality, and the Right to Critical Thinking: My Time in Evin prison

A public lecture by

Homa Hoodfar

Dr. Homa Hoodfar is a Professor Emerita in Anthropology at Concordia University, Montreal. Internationally renowned as a scholar on gender and public life in Islamic societies, she was imprisoned and subject to interrogation for 112 days in Iran's Evin prison, notorious for detaining intellectuals, activists and journalists. Dr. Hoodfar survived her time in prison by studying her captors and writing on her cell walls about her experiences and interactions with other prisoners. In September 2016, she was released from prison after an international human rights campaign.

February 7, 2017

5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Rozanski Hall, Room 103

This event is free and open to the public.

Announcements

Passing:



Johnston, Dean. Dean died peacefully at the Guelph General Hospital on Monday, January 23, 2017 at the age of 96. He is survived by his wife Noreen "Norrie", daughter Anna, extended family, niece Lesley and dear friends. Predeceased by his brother Bruce. Cremation has taken place. A memorial service will be held at Harcourt United Church. Date and time will be announced and updated on the Gilchrist Chapel-McIntyre & Wilkie funeral home website. In lieu of flowers, donations to the Salvation Army would be appreciated.

Other Announcements:

- De-cluttering your cocoon??? Winter is a great time for this they say. Are you expending your energy by de-cluttering your cocoon?? Remember to set aside those useful household items for the Annual Harcourt Garage Sale. Last year the sale resulted in over \$2500 for the Harcourt budget and we hope to do that again. Bring your gently used items to the gym on **Friday April 7** and volunteer on Saturday April 8th. Fun and satisfaction guaranteed. Contact Janet Webster at fwebst0953@rogers.com.
- Don't forget Mana Pancake Day! See the poster on Page 10 of the Herald for more information.

CHORDS OF THE COMMUNITY

THE ROYAL CITY AMBASSADORS & THE ROYAL CITY UKULELE ENSEMBLE

present

A CONCERT IN SUPPORT OF THE GUESTS OF
CHALMERS COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTRE



please bring a non-perishable
food donation



emcee
Tom Watson

February 25 2017
7:30 PM ☆ \$20.00



Harcourt Memorial United Church
87 Dean Ave, Guelph



PURCHASE TICKETS FROM

www.cynthiakmusic.com

226-343-1911

cynthiakmusic@gmail.com

www.royalcityambassadors.com

519-546-4995

Chalmers Community Services

Centre 519-822-8778



The United Church
of Canada

Minutes for Mission

Our gifts for Mission & Service support racial justice and our intercultural journey.

As we begin Black History Month or African Heritage Month in Canada, let us celebrate the many contributions of Black people to Canadian society and to the United Church.

Let us take time to remember African-Canadian history, the struggles and the haunting legacy of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

Black people have been part of the United Church from its beginning and continue to play a vital role in the church today. We celebrate this history by sharing the story of Union United Church in Montreal, Quebec.

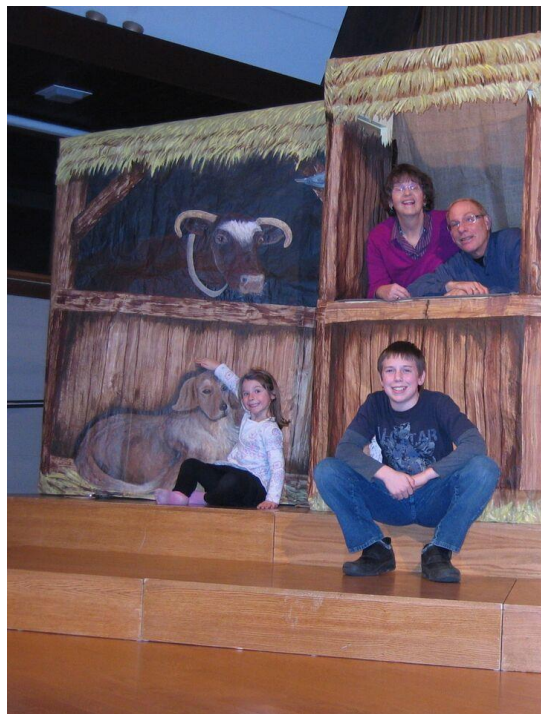
This church was created in 1907 and was known as Union Congregational Church. From the start Union led the way in reaching out to the Black railway porters and their families who were segregated from the rest of Montreal, offering them a place of worship and a place to call their own.

We sing thanksgiving for the foundation of Black people who have led the way toward The United Church of Canada becoming an intercultural church, a church where all are welcome!

If Mission & Service is already a regular part of your giving, thank you so much! If you have not given for Mission & Service, please join me in making Mission & Service a regular part of your life of faith. In all our Mission & Service giving, with a willing heart, we sing thanksgiving to God!

February 20th is Family Day !

*Family Day is observed in the Canadian provinces of Alberta, Ontario and Saskatchewan on the third Monday of February. This holiday celebrates the importance of families and family life to people and their communities. **But remember -** families come in all different forms. What does YOUR family look like?*



Behind the Scenes

by Gillian Joseph

If I told you that it might be interesting to *scry into an orbuculum* some people might wonder what the heck I am talking about. Of course, this is only a fancy way of saying that a look into a crystal ball might give us an interesting glimpse into what the future holds. However, when it comes to predicting what the future of religion will be, we don't need a crystal ball at all – there are more reliable ways to look ahead. For example, the Pew Research Center's Global Religious Futures project is based on data obtained from public opinion surveys in more than 40 countries, demographic analysis that covers 234 countries and coding on religious and social hostilities worldwide. Their interactive website is located at <http://globalreligiousfutures.org/> and it allows the viewer to sort information by country, by religion and much, much more. It is a fascinating look ahead to a world that will likely be very different to the one we know today, and one of which our children and grandchildren will be part.

These statistics show that by 2050, the size of the Muslim population is expected to increase dramatically, equaling that of Christians as the world's largest religious group. This is predicted to happen largely because Muslims have the highest fertility rates and the youngest population of all religious groups. The majority (more than 300 million) will be located in India. In addition, Judaism will no longer be the largest non-Christian religion in the U.S. as Muslims are projected to be more numerous there as well. Interestingly, atheists, agnostics and others who do not claim association to any religion are on the decline – so yes, it seems earlier predictions from social scientists were wrong on that one!

However, looking at a 2015 report by the Religious Freedom and Business Foundation (<https://goo.gl/4z0gfC>), it is interesting to read that by 2050 only one of the five leading world economies will have a majority Christian population – the United States. The other mega economies will be China, India, Japan and Indonesia – all with predominantly non-Christian populations. As I reflected on this fascinating information I wondered: How are we preparing our children for that wonderful new world of religious diversity?

Stacie Nevadomski Berdan (2014), an expert on advising organizations about international careers, says that parents today have an important responsibility to teach their children about being good *global* citizens for the future marketplace. She states that: “As 21st century global workers, our children will need cultural sensitivity; the ability to interpret diverse situations, information and facts while being an empathetic team player; and a passion and curiosity that enables them to enjoy the cultural diversity we share”. However, Nevadomski Berdan also asserts that as parents, this teaching should not only be directed at children, but also at our institutions. By insisting

on more culturally-based educational opportunities in schools, encouraging multi-cultural celebrations in our communities and working to raise awareness of those who are marginalized because of their culture and religion, we help our children and other people to respect others and to become comfortable with diversity.

In 2010 when I taught my first class at the University of Guelph Humber in Toronto I found myself in a classroom full of amazing students from Jamaica, Russia, India, Poland and Pakistan. I learned more about the world from these bright young people than I could ever have taught them, and it opened my eyes to the great resource that is this country's growing diversity.

In the words of Clare Herbert Woolston and my favourite childhood hymn:

*Jesus loves the little children
All the children of the world
Red, brown, yellow
Black and white
They are precious in His sight
Jesus loves the little children
Of the world*

Do we talk enough about diversity in the church with joy? Do the messages about church community that we are teaching our children include acceptance of other cultures and lifestyles? Do we do enough to make other cultures and faiths feel welcome in our church? These are the questions we struggle with as the world slowly changes around us. It is unlikely that I will be here in 2050, but that distant gaze gives us lots of time to, in the words of Crosby, Stills and Nash, "teach your children well".



Harcourt Calendar – February 2017

Updated January 18, 2017—www.harcourtuc.ca for most up-to-date information

Wednesday February 1

9:30am Lightshine Singers [F]
1:30pm Tai Chi [F]
6:30pm Guides [F]
6:45pm Beavers [G]
7:00pm Creative Intentions [C]
7:00pm Rainbow Chorus Registration [S]
7:30pm Rainbow Chorus Rehearsal [S]

Thursday February 2

8:45am Mindstretch [202]
9:30am Stroke Recovery Executive [F]
1:30pm Park'n Dance [G/F]
7:30pm Choir Practice [M]

Friday February 3

10:30am Spirituality in Music [C]
7:00pm Guides Sleepover [F]

Saturday February 4

10:00am Explorations in Progressive Christianity [202]

Sunday February 5

9:00am Worship [C]
10:30am Worship [S]
10:30am "Manna" Service [G/F]
11:30am Budget Meeting [C]

Monday February 6

Office Closed

1:30pm Prayer Shawl Group [202]
6:50pm Communications Committee [L]
7:00pm Scouts [G]

Tuesday February 7

11:30am Staff & Admin Meetings
6:45 Cubs [G]
7:00pm Handbell Choir [M]

Wednesday February 8

9:30am Lightshine Singers [F]
1:30pm Tai Chi [F]
6:30pm Guides [F]
6:45pm Beavers [G]
7:00pm Ministry & Personnel Committee [L]
7:00pm Rainbow Chorus Registration [S]
7:30pm Rainbow Chorus Rehearsal [S]

Thursday February 9

8:45am Mindstretch [202]
1:30pm Park'n Dance [G/F]
7:00pm Sharing Evenings [F]
7:30pm Choir Practice [M]

Friday February 10

7:00pm Junior Youth Group [G/F]

Saturday February 11

10:00am Explorations in Progressive Christianity [202]
10:00am Sacred Circle Dance [G]

Sunday February 12

9:00am Worship [C]
10:30am Worship [S]
10:30am "Manna" Service [G/F]
7:00pm High School Youth Group [202]

Monday February 13

Office Closed

11:45am Caroline Harcourt Women's Fellowship [F]
7:00pm Scouts [G]

Tuesday February 14

11:30am Staff & Admin Meetings
6:45pm Cubs [G]
7:00pm Handbell Choir [M]

Wednesday February 15

9:30am Lightshine Singers [F]
1:30pm Tai Chi [F]
6:00pm Preschool Toy Wash [K]
6:30pm Guides [F]
6:45pm Beavers [G]
7:00pm Property Committee [202]
7:00pm Council Meeting [C]
7:00pm Rainbow Chorus Rehearsal [S]

Thursday February 16

8:45am Mindstretch [202]
1:30pm Park'n Dance [G/F]
7:30pm Choir Practice [M]

Saturday February 18

10:00am Explorations in Progressive
Christianity [202]

Sunday February 19

9:00am Worship [C]
10:30am Worship [S]
10:30am "Manna" Service [G/F]

Monday February 20

Family Day
Church and Office Closed

Tuesday February 21

11:30am Staff & Admin Meetings
11:30am Stroke Recovery Lunch [F]
6:45pm Cubs [G]
7:00pm Handbell Choir [M]

Wednesday February 22

9:30am Lightshine Singers [F]
1:30pm Tai Chi [F]
6:30pm Guides [F]
6:45pm Beavers [G]
7:00pm Rainbow Chorus Rehearsal [S]

Thursday February 23

8:45am Mindstretch [202]
1:30pm Park'n Dance [G/F]
7:30pm Choir Practice [M]

Friday February 24

10:30am Spirituality in Music [C]
7:00pm Junior Youth Group [G/F]

Saturday February 25

10:00am Explorations in Progressive
Christianity [202]
7:30pm Concert – Chords in the Community [S]

Sunday February 26

9:00am Worship [C]
10:30am Worship [S]
10:30am "Manna" Service [G/F]
11:30am Congregational Meeting
7:00pm High School Youth Group [202]

Monday February 27

Office Closed
9:30am Quilting Group [F]
1:30pm Prayer Shawl Group [202]
7:00pm ARCH Men's Social Group [202]
7:00pm Scouts [G]

Tuesday February 28

11:30am Staff & Admin Meetings
6:45pm Cubs [G]
7:00pm Handbell Choir [M]

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