



Spirited Summerlea

United Church of Canada

Newsletter

December 2013



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CALENDAR

December

- 08 10:30am 2nd of Advent – Food Sunday
White Gift Sunday**
- 11 7:30pm Candlelight Service
- 14 3pm Christmas Carol Singing
- 15 10:30am 3rd of Advent**
7:30pm Lakeshore Concert Band
Christmas Dessert Concert
- 22 10:30am 4th of Advent**
with guest musicians:
Lakeshore Saxophone Quartet
- 24 7pm Family Christmas Service**
9:30pm Communion Service
- 29` 11am Ecumenical service at
St. Genevieve United**
(No service at Summerlea United on Dec. 29th)

JANUARY

- 05 10:30am Sunday Worship**
- 12 10:30am Sunday Worship**
- 19 10:30am Food Sunday**
- 26 10:30am Sunday Worship**

Elders' Corner:

Next Communion Service: Christmas Eve, 9:30pm

EDITORS:

*Jane Cowell Poitras,
Susan Hawke & Lynn Closs*



Every year at Christmas, Queen Elizabeth pronounces a Royal Christmas Message. Having been born in England and brought up in Canada by staunch monarchists, watching the Christmas message was always an important part of our family's Christmas ritual! We would stop whatever we were doing on Christmas Day and crowd around our television to watch the Queen!

The message typically combines a chronicle of that year's major events, with the Queen's own personal milestones and feelings on Christmas. Apparently, it is one of the very few instances when the sovereign speaks publicly without advice from any Commonwealth Prime Ministers or Privy Council Members. Planning for each year's address begins months earlier, when the Queen establishes a theme and appropriate archival footage is collected and assembled. The actual speech is recorded a few days prior to Christmas.

In a context where the Queen's relevance is often questioned in Canada (and especially in Quebec!) one may wonder what pertinence these messages have for us as individuals. Personally, I have always found these messages to be well thought out and often uplifting. Here are some examples from the last few years:

In 2004, the message opened with footage of the Queen handing out presents to her own family; the theme of the message was cultural and religious diversity and the benefits of tolerance.

In 2005, The Queen reflected on such tragedies as the [Indian Ocean tsunami](#), [Hurricane Katrina](#), the [earthquake in Kashmir](#), and the [bombings in London](#).

She praised as "quite remarkable" the humanitarian responses from people of all faiths.

In 2006, the speech, was about the relationship between the generations and how young and old could come together to strengthen their communities, with strong references to the inclusion of Muslims and other faiths into mainstream society.

The theme in 2007 centered on the family, including Jesus' birth into a family under unfavorable circumstances, and the Queen spoke about the common duty to care for the vulnerable in society.

The Queen focused in 2011 on the importance of the King James Bible (400 years old in 2011) as a unifying force and of sport in building communities and creating harmony.

Wherever one may stand on the constitutional question of the Queen's presence in Canada, I think all would agree that her messages are positive and reflect values held dear by the majority of Canadians.

As Queen says every year, "I wish you all a Very Happy Christmas".

Jane Cowell-Poitras

A Word from the Minister

We are now heading into the home stretch of this year 2013, and we begin our observance of Advent, that time during which we prepare for the coming of Christmas and all that it means for each one of us.

This year in particular, however, our time of preparation for Christmas will be "punctuated" by the ongoing debate regarding Bill 60, the legislative version of the document that has now come to be known as "The Charter of Quebec Values". This piece of legislation that our provincial government seeks to pass would ban the wearing of "overt religious symbols" by public employees, an act which critics of the bill have indicated would be in direct violation of both the Canadian and the Quebec charters of rights and freedoms, in that it takes away a person's right to freedom of religious expression. This has given rise to a huge amount of speculation as to what it would all mean if this proposed bill became law. For example, during my sermon on November 17, I made mention of the large, illuminated cross that stands at the top of Mount Royal. If Bill 60 were to pass into law, would the city be required to remove this famous and historic

artifact? And if not (and I really hope they don't), then what would this mean if we were to take away the religious freedoms of a significant number of individuals in our midst, but preserve one of the biggest and most ostentatious religious symbols simply because of its historical significance? Many legal experts have indicated that, even if the bill passes into law, it would very likely not stand up to a legal challenge in the higher courts. All of this is good news to those of us who stand in opposition to the proposed bill (of whom I am one), but there are others who hasten to add that, even if the bill never passes into law, the damage has already been done. There have already been a number of reported incidents of verbal abuse, mostly directed against Muslim women who choose to wear the head scarf. There seem to be those who feel that our provincial government has somehow made it "okay" to express this kind of intolerance toward those who are different.

In this sense, the proposed charter of values seems to have brought out some of the worst in people, but on another level, it serves as confirmation that we do, in fact, live in a secular society. In almost any community that I know of, there are more people who do not have any religious affiliation than there are those who do. In my opinion, this in no way means that our freedom to express our religious beliefs should be taken away, but neither should any set of beliefs be imposed upon anyone. I thought of this recently when I was at a two-day event interviewing prospective candidates for ministry, and our meeting was held at a Roman Catholic retreat centre on Gouin Blvd. In the parking lot was a car with a bumper sticker on the back that read "Put Christ back into Christmas". I couldn't help thinking to myself, "for me, Christ was never taken out of Christmas". But then again, I am a Christian and an active church member, and therefore, acknowledging Christmas as the celebration of Christ's birth is what Christmas is all about for me. I have my doubts that a person with no affiliation with the Christian church is going to read that bumper sticker and suddenly change their whole perspective on Christmas and what it means to them. In the same way, I also have my doubts that anyone would see someone wearing a hijab or a kippah, and suddenly want to convert to that person's religion, which, ironically, is something the creators of the Quebec Charter of Values seem to fear will happen.

Those like myself who stand in opposition to the proposed charter of values are standing up for our right to freely express our religious faith, not for the right to impose it upon others. Perhaps now, more than ever, it is time for us to “keep the faith”. With this recent challenge to our right to freedom of religious expression, perhaps it is time for us to truly take advantage of our right to live out our faith and to practice it. This means not relying on others to do that for us, then criticizing them when they don’t. For example, this seems to be less of an issue today, but I recall the time not that long ago when people were upset that prayers were no longer being said in schools. But how many of those parents who were offended that prayers were no longer being said in schools actually prayed together as a family at home? Just as it is objectionable that the state should attempt to take away people’s right to religious expression, so it is equally questionable to attempt to impose one’s beliefs on others. Telling people to put Christ back into Christmas is not likely to meet with much success, but living our faith with integrity and celebrating our freedom to express our faith is ultimately what will keep our faith alive, even in the midst of the secular society that is all around us. Criticizing the society around us for not embracing our faith, or relying on others to teach our children about our faith, will never get us the result we want. It is in living out the best aspects of our faith that others will see what our faith means to us, and it will continue, in many ways, to help make the world a better place. May all the hope, peace, joy, and love of a Christ-filled Advent and Christmas be yours.

Rev. Scott A. Patton.



2014 United Church Calendars are available at the church office for \$5.50. To reserve one, please call Susan at 514-634-2651. ☺

Candlelight Service **Wednesday, December 11th at 7:30pm**

This year’s guest speaker will be the **Reverend David Lefneski** of SouthWest United. Bring your friends and neighbours for a



beautiful time of friendship and refreshments. The free-will offering will be much appreciated for those in need in our community.

WRITE FOR RIGHTS with Amnesty International **December 10th, International Human Rights Day**

This is the big one. It's the most important day of the year for human rights. And it's the day when Amnesty International members do what they do best:

[Pledge now to take action on Human Rights Day](#)

On December 10th, Amnesty supporters across Canada and in 80 countries around the world will rally to write letters, send petitions, tweet, celebrate and campaign on some of the most pressing issues in human rights. **Last year, we sent over 1.8 million messages** asking governments to respect the rights of people and communities at risk. **Help us reach two million!**



What are Living Gifts?

A **Living Gift** is a way to honour a person you care about by giving a gift that makes a social contribution. Make a donation to Saint Columba House in the name of someone you wish to honour. Gifts include a card of acknowledgement made with original Hand in Hand Art on the front of the card with a description of what the gift will make possible inside. The gift package options are:
 \$20 = 4 Christmas dinner meals for low-income families
 \$50 = 20 hot meals for children in the Alternate School
 \$60 = 4 hours of one-on-one tutoring for children struggling with reading and mathematics
 \$100 = a summer day camp registration at St. Columba House for one child
 \$200 = the participation for one month of an intellectually-challenged adult
 Gift cards will be available each Sunday morning after service, at coffee hour, or contact the church office at 514-634-2651.

Tourtieres

Homemade tourtieres and mini tourtieres (4 minis per box) are available for \$8 a box, and can be purchased Monday to Fridays from 9am-1pm, but they're going fast! Please call the church office at 514-634-2651 if you'd like to reserve some.



Western Lachine Meals on Wheels takes place in the Summerlea Church kitchen every Tuesday and Thursday morning. We have teams of volunteers who cook, or who deliver the meals, or who help clean up the kitchen afterwards. Volunteers work 1 day per month, (2 if you'd like) which works out to approximately 2 hours of their time per month. **We are always looking for volunteers.** Do you find yourself with some spare time and would like to volunteer in the new year? Please call Susan at 514-634-2651 or 514-634-4827, and I can discuss it with you in greater detail. Don't hesitate...pick up the phone.

The Christmas Gift Tree

The Gift Tree is now in place in the Sanctuary with ornaments & gift tags. Please choose an ornament and remember to purchase a gift suitable for the age and gender of the child on your Gift Tree gift tag, and bring the wrapped gift to the White Gift Service on Dec. 8th. Make sure to mark on a label attached to the gift what it is, and the age and gender for whom it is intended, i.e: Lego, boy, 8 yrs old or jewellery kit, girl, 10 yrs old. Your generous gifts will accompany Christmas Food baskets for families in the community.



An Ecumenical Service will take place at St. Geneviève United, 4697 St. John's Blvd. in D.D.O. on Sunday, **December 29th at 11 am**. *There will be no service at Summerlea United.* This is an opportunity to give those people who want to attend church on Sunday, December 29th, a place to worship which will be lively and have a lot more people with whom to sing and pray. Join us.

A note from Saint Columba House - Christmas 2013:

We would like to thank you for supporting Saint Columba House throughout the year and everyone's generosity to our Christmas appeal.

Every year we do our utmost to make the holidays a special time for the children and adults that participant in our programs. This year, we would like to invite your congregation to once again, be a part of Christmas for the children and adult participants.

We were very fortunate to have a great response to the appeal and we are hoping to continue this Christmas tradition with your support. For the congregational White Gift Service we would suggest that the gifts be non-perishable food items, toiletries, socks (men's/women's, children's) art supplies, educational gifts: Books, legos, mega blocks, Sports equipment: hockey sticks, basketballs, skates. All gifts are welcomed and used. The address is 2365 Grand Trunk, Montreal, 514-932-6202.

Rev. Patricia Lisson, Executive Director

Claxton & Grants cake sales

As an adherent of the Lakeshore Civitan Club, let me thank those people who purchased these products. This cake sale is the major fund raising event for the Club.



There are many outlets to purchase the cakes – a few – TD Bank, Dorval; the Lakeshore Hospital; Cambridge Residence. The funds or profits are returned to the community.

All cakes are sold by volunteers, and all money raised goes to local charities, among them: West Island Residences for the Intellectually Handicapped, Quebec Special Olympics, Generations Foundation, AVATH (Training for Independent Living), as well as our annual distribution of Easter Food Baskets for the underprivileged in the West Island.

The recipients receive their donation at our Spring evening meeting. One other community centre is Resurrection Church food baskets. For years Luis Guynan delivered 'baskets' to shut ins. A few years ago he asked me to assist him, which I have. His health, however, waned, and I now do the delivery – to four or five



clients. It is only once or twice monthly and takes about two hours.

Brian Cadoret organizes this project – collecting food from many sources. Money is welcomed and necessary, since the milk and meat are purchased. A few familiar faces – June Tosh and Martha Waugh – have volunteered for many years!

Once again, many thanks for your concern and interest.

Terry Jones

A word from your Stewardship Chairperson

Envelopes will soon be available for those who requested offering envelopes on their stewardship form for the 2014 givings. If you've not yet requested envelopes and would like some, please call John Coffin (514-634-1116) and he will supply you with a number and a box of envelopes. A gentle reminder to please fill in and return your stewardship commitment forms in order for the church to prepare its budget for 2014. Many thanks to those who have already done so.

Income Tax Receipts

For 2013 income tax receipt purposes, you are reminded that all contributions to Summerlea United must be received by December 31st.

Bazaar Report 2013

Every year Summerlea's Bazaar evolves a little. This year we felt a little more tired, older, but also wiser. We were happy to welcome some new faces and willing hands who really made a big difference! Of course we also missed a few old friends. Some stalls were relocated, some contracted a little, while others expanded, but all in all it was once again a great success. \$17,300 or so, with meat pies still to be sold. We have received many appreciative comments both from within and outside the church. You should all feel proud of being participants of such a fabulous community!

What a wonderful day of fun, laughter, community building, team spirit and fellowship. Thank you all! We hope to see you all again next year – on Saturday November 15th 2014.

Kate, Nancy and Sinclair.



FAMILY LIFE CENTRE

Mission

Prompted by the love of God and neighbour, the Family Life Centre is a coordinated project in community outreach operated by West Island churches.

Our Purpose

To support family life through referral services, short-term counselling and relationship education.

Summerlea is one of the supporting congregations of the Family Life Centre. Scott Patton is one of the counsellors. Referrals are taken by intake volunteers by either voice-mail or e-mail. They are then referred to professional counsellors who can meet with the client for up to 6 sessions. Services are free, although donations towards operating costs are welcome. The Family Life Centre also organises periodic workshops with a range of topics from "preparation for kindergarten" to "retirement planning". "Journalling" is always a popular, well attended workshop. Services can be accessed by calling 514 630 7794 or by email familylifecentre@gmail.com.



E-Newsletters - Would you like to receive this email electronically? It would save on postage and trees! If so, please send an email to Susan at the

church office summerlea_united@videotron.ca if you're not already an e-newsletter recipient.

Thank you Volunteers!

THANK YOU to everyone, who worked tirelessly to make 2,432 small meat pies, 630 large meat pies. The price remains the same as last year for the mini pies (\$8), and \$8 for the large meat pies.

When we bought the small pie-bottom press the pie plates were 3/4" deep....now we are unable to buy small pie plates that are this size so



the small pie bottom press is not quite the right size for the pie plates that are available so each small pie bottom had to be repaired by hand. I am going to contact the producer of the presses to see if we can buy a new press that will fit our tinfoil plates....

We had quite a few new workers this year and the job is so much easier when there are many hands....So thank-you again to everyone.

Note: *Please take a minute to visit our website, www.summerlea.ca and see pictures of various stages of the production of thousands of meat pies. Many thanks to **John Osborne** who manages and updates our website each week with the Sunday bulletin, pictures and current events of our vibrant church.*

The Lakeshore Concert Band will present its Annual Christmas Dessert Concert on Sunday, December 15th at 7:30pm at Summerlea again this year. The concert of holiday music will be presented in the Sanctuary, and will be followed by our famous home-made desserts in Acadia Hall. Tickets are \$15 (\$12 students and seniors) at the door, and \$12 (\$10) if bought in advance. A donation of a non-perishable food item for the community food bank would be most appreciated. See Leslie or Keith for more information.



Music Notes

How time flies at this time of year! Your choir is practising madly for the Candlelight Service on December 11th. My thanks to all the choir members taking part for the time and effort they put in to rehearsals for this special service for Summerlea. Thanks also to Dik Harris, Brad Moffat, Bob Kanemy, Andrejs Vitols, Anne Allmark, and Jean Stewart for again volunteering to sing with us for this Christmas celebration. Tell all your friends and family to join us for a great service and wonderful goodies afterwards!



By the time you read this, our Octet Plus Fundraising concert for the Teapot bus for transportation will

have taken place. Thanks to all who came out to support this worthy cause!

The Lakeshore Concert Band will again be performing here at Summerlea on Sunday, December 15th, their annual Dessert Concert. Leslie and Keith Field will be performing in this group, as you know. I'm sure we'll see many of you at this always enjoyable event.

Also, the Lakeshore Saxophone Quartet (the Fields' chamber group) will be providing the music for our church service in December. A lovely pre-Christmas treat!

Thanks again to all the performers this Christmas season, both young and old, for your enthusiastic participation in the music programme.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!

Connie Osborne

Christmas Carol Singing Saturday, Dec 14th

We'll gather at Summerlea Church at 3pm and from there spread out to share the songs of the season to residents of the Bayview, Les



Floralies and the Belvedere. Folks of all ages are welcome! After carolling, Linda & Roy Rodd are kindly opening up their home for a Potluck Dinner at around 6:30pm. Call 514-634-2651 if you would like to participate, or look for the sign up sheet on Sunday mornings.

RECIPE CORNER

This green bean recipe is a holiday favourite at our house.

Lynn Closs

Sweet & Sour Green Beans



2 strips bacon, cut up
2/3 cup diced onions
1 tbsp flour
1 tsp dry mustard
1/3 cup sugar
1 tsp salt
1/8 tsp pepper
1/4 cup vegetable liquid

2 tbsp vinegar
Green beans

Cook together bacon and onions until onions are transparent. Stir in flour, mustard, sugar, salt & pepper. Carefully add vegetable liquid and vinegar, bring to a boil. Pour mixture over the cooked green beans. Cover and simmer for 12 minutes.

This dessert is also a favourite of mine because I can make it a few days in advance and same time.

Frozen Lemon Mousse with Sauce Cardinale

Mousse

1 tbsp vegetable oil
2-3 tbsp ground almonds
4 egg yolks
½ cup fresh lemon juice
¼ cup sugar
1-1/2 tbsp grated lemon rind

4 egg whites
1/8 tsp cream of tartar
1/8 tsp salt
¾ cup sugar

1-1/2 cups 35% cream – whipped
Fresh fruits for garnish

Oil an 8” spring form pan, sprinkle with ground almonds. Shake pan so that almonds cover sides and bottom of pan completely.

Combine egg yolks, lemon juice, ¼ cup sugar and lemon peel in a large bowl and mix well. Set aside.

Beat egg whites until foamy. Add cream of tartar and salt and continue beating until soft peaks form. Gradually add ¾ cup of sugar, beating until egg whites are stiff and glossy.

Gently fold egg whites and whipped cream into egg yolk mixture. Carefully spoon into the springform pan. Cover with foil wrap and freeze at least 8 hours. Serve with Cardinale sauce.

Sauce Cardinale

1 – 15 oz package of frozen raspberries, thawed
2/3 cup sugar
2 tbsp Kirsh, Cointreau or Grand Marnier (or whatever you have)

Press berries through a sieve to remove seeds (I just put everything into the blender). Place berries, sugar and liqueur in a blender and blend until smooth. Chill

William Hunter Memorial Fund – Dec. 2013

Thanks for your generous support to the William Hunter Memorial Fund which honours the memory and contribution of William Hunter. He was a former member of Summerlea who died suddenly in his first years as a United Church Minister. We collect loose offerings from the early service on Christmas Eve and the special envelopes you will find in the pews or with this newsletter. These offerings are our only source of funds for the support of our sponsored children.

We currently sponsor three children at a cost of \$456.00 per child each year. They are Angelica, a 10 year old girl from Paraguay, Noami, a 12 year old girl and Tahiru, a 17 year old boy, both from Ghana. Through your generosity these children will receive an education, medical care, clothing and improved nutrition. You are helping to make a difference in the lives of children, families and communities in developing countries. We are grateful for your continued assistance.

Thank you.

Dale Romagosa



Happy Holiday Advice

1. Take a break after work instead of plunging right into decorating or wrapping gifts.
2. Ask your mate what the perfect gift would be. It saves time.
3. Coach the kids on how to say “thank you” to others for each gift. Remember, what kids want most is your attention during the holidays.
4. Leave old hurts behind. If you “go home” for the holidays, say psychologists, forgive everyone first.
5. Share your blessings. Give something to the less fortunate.
6. Find intimacy through shared stories and traditions.

Merry Christmas to All!

There is a certain magic to this most welcome season. It cannot be described and cannot be escaped.

Christmas has the power to warm hearts, make troubles seem less important, and make bitterness disappear. It can turn a hard-hearted person into a silent Santa.

The magic puts a sparkle in children's eyes and puts a touch of beauty where none existed before.

Christmas knows no boundaries. Its legends and customs have come to us from the far corners of the Earth, and every year its magic touch brings people closer together.

The magic of Christmas has lasted through nearly twenty centuries. The message of Christmas, "Peace on Earth, good will toward men," is as powerful as though it had just been written. These words, sung by angels on the first Christmas Eve, mean more than an end to conflict between nations. They mean that true peace of mind starts with the individual. Their intent is to make the world a more peaceful place.

May we all have a wonderful, magical holiday season filled with peace, love, joy, and charity. What one gives or does for charity comes back in many magical ways.

Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year!

News and Notes

I am delighted to report that Jane Percy's chemo and radiation treatments recently ended. Jane would like to extend her gratitude to everyone for their prayers, cards and kind words of encouragement that she received during her journey to healing. Jane is deeply grateful to all her chauffeurs who were a tremendous help with driving her back and forth to hospital for her daily treatments. An act of kindness goes a long way.

Speaking of kind acts, I am very grateful to Mehdi, WMRC group leader (West Montreal Readaptation Centre), and his students who are always so willing to help out when needed. Thank you for doing a super job each Friday morning folding the Sunday bulletin, and for the cup of tea that is cheerfully delivered to my office every morning. Susan

A big thank you to Gunnell Yates, a community friend and recently, a volunteer at Summerlea, who has been giving Connie a helping hand on Thursday mornings cataloguing her music.

Sarah McCall was recently transferred to Palliative Care. Please keep dear Sarah and her family in your prayers.

Our sympathy is extended to Sheila & Richard Hebert and their family upon the sudden death of their nephew, Sébastien, on October 13th. Sébastien leaves behind his wife and 2 young daughters.

Our prayer list in the Sunday bulletin has increased in numbers of late; some are members of Summerlea, some, family or friends of a Summerlea member. Please keep these folks in your prayers throughout the Advent season, as well as our shut-ins and those in hospital.

*Love came down at Christmas;
Love all lovely, love divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Stars and angels gave the sign*

Wishing you peace, joy and good health for the New Year.
Susan

*Merry
Christmas*

**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR**