



# Spirited Summerlea

United Church of Canada

## Newsletter

December 2015



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### CALENDAR

#### December

- 06 10:30am 2<sup>nd</sup> of Advent**  
**White Gift Sunday**  
*Congregational meeting following service*
- 9 7:30pm Candlelight Service**
- 13 10:30am 3<sup>rd</sup> of Advent**  
**15 7pm Taisé Worship Service**
- 20 10:30am 4<sup>th</sup> of Advent**
- 24 7pm Family Christmas Service**  
**9:30pm Communion Service**
- 27 11am Ecumenical service at**  
**St. Columba by the Lake**  
(No service at Summerlea United on Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>)

#### JANUARY

- 03 10:30am Sunday Worship**
- 10 10:30am Sunday Worship**
- 17 10:30am Soup Sunday**
- 24 10:30am Sunday Worship**
- 31 10:30am Sunday Worship**

Elders' Corner:

Next Communion Service: Christmas Eve, 9:30pm

#### EDITORS:

*Jane Cowell Poitras,  
Susan Hawke & Lynn Closs*



The days have become shorter and the weather colder. Most of us are still busy bagging leaves or are starting to make plans for the upcoming holidays. So much to do and so little time to do it! Baking of treats, writing of cards, decking of halls and “the dreaded” buying of gifts. The list seems endless. During this busy time of year why not also give a gift to yourself? The gift of gratitude can change your life. It costs nothing and takes little time to achieve but the happiness and sense of perspective it affords is wonderful. Taking a few moments out of your busy day to count your blessings allows you to recognize how truly lucky you are. Getting into the habit of being grateful will cause a subtle shift from frustration and sadness to a more positive outlook. That is not to say, that we all do not have our share of worries and sorrow but we also have things for which to be grateful. For example, we have a welcoming church with a great musical tradition that offers not only a place of worship but fellowship as well. Gratitude can be as simple as a thank you. It can take the form of a daily prayer at bedtime or before you rise in the morning. Some people feel that keeping a journal allows them to be more mindful of their blessings. As we approach the coming holidays, with its gifts of love, peace and joy, let us give ourselves the gift of gratitude. Merry Christmas from the Newsletter editors!

*Susan Hawke*

### A Word from the Minister

As of today (November 29 – the publication date of this newsletter), we begin the season of Advent. As a minister, I feel that it is part of my job to keep people “Advent-focused”, because I am aware that many people want to “get Advent over with” as soon as possible because we really want to get on with Christmas. Many ministers that I know of find this reality being lived out especially in the singing of hymns in church: we have a lovely selection of Advent hymns in our hymnbook, but most people seem to want to get to the Christmas carols as soon as possible! To help myself to stay focused on Advent, I went to the on-line dictionary to see what definitions of the word “advent” were being offered. Along with the expected definitions of advent, there was also some information about the month of November, and I discovered that November was “sweet potato awareness month”. Being the end of November, it appears that I have missed that for this year, but in any case, as I said, I’m trying to stay focused on Advent.

The dictionary defined (small “a”) advent as the “arrival” of something, or that which is “coming into view”. It also defined (capital “a”) Advent as “the coming of Christ into the world”. It just so happens that on three different occasions in the last while, people have told me that I could not come to their homes because of the messy state that their homes were in. In the case of two of them, they ended up at my house instead because, apparently, my house was cleaner than theirs. I thought of this metaphor when I began to think about the second definition, “the coming of Christ into the world”. Those of us who try to take Advent seriously could well think of offering a similar excuse, especially this year. If the world is our home, then we might have some reservations about Christ coming into this world in the state that it is in today.

The recent terrorist attacks in Paris and Beirut have shocked the world, and have led to extreme reactions of sadness, anger, and sometimes even hopelessness. The fighting in Syria has created a wave of refugees seeking an escape from the violence and danger, and seeking a better life in another country. The vast majority of these people are now in refugee camps, often living in deplorable conditions, simply because no better alternative exists at the present time. The

need to respond and help those in this critical situation has been very strong, as has the feeling that the problem is so overwhelming that we hardly know where to begin in addressing it.

Thanks especially to the members of Summerlea’s Outreach Committee, we have now begun to discuss how we can move from simply feeling overwhelmed, to actually helping make a difference in this situation. The Executive Board of our church has approved a proposal to work with other West Island congregations in sponsoring a Syrian refugee family to come here to Canada, and we will be hearing more about this both during and after our worship service on Sunday, December 6. During this Advent season, this is one of the ways that those of us who call ourselves Christians can be signs of Christ’s coming into the world. While it may be true that we are not quite ready to welcome the Prince of Peace into our “house”, this is an opportunity for us to truly make a difference in the lives of a few, while we trust that God’s Spirit is also at work in others, helping them to respond as they are able.

On another note, Advent is as much about preparing ourselves for Christ’s coming as it is about preparing our world. Many of us live hectic lives, and we sometimes become so busy that we don’t take the time we need to spend some quiet moments listening to God’s voice and finding the peace we need in our lives. God is with us always, but sometimes the busyness makes us forget that God is there. For this very reason, Connie and I had been talking about having a Taize (pronounced “Tay-zay”) service, a quiet, meditative worship service that incorporates music from the Taize community in France, and is usually done in very dim lighting with lots of candles. This service was held on November 10, and about 25 people gathered to experience what was a new kind of worship service for us at Summerlea. Due to the overwhelmingly positive feedback we got from people, we are now planning to have another Taize service on Tuesday, December 15 at 7:00 p.m. Even though it will still be Advent at that time, I’m sure there will be all kinds of other Christmas celebrations and events for you to participate in, but if you would like to spend a moment this Advent re-discovering the presence of Christ in your life and catching a glimpse of that “peace that passes understanding,” come and join us for some quiet

time in the glow of candlelight and know the loving presence of God who comes to us in Advent, and all through the year.

*Rev. Scott A. Patton.*

**2016 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 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm



This year's guest speaker will be the Reverend David Clinker of Mount Royal United. Bring your friends and neighbours for a beautiful time of friendship and refreshments. The proceeds from a free-will offering will be given to the Benevolent Fund which provides help for those in need.



### 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 \$9 a box, and can be purchased Monday to Fridays from 9am-1pm, or on Sunday mornings, but they're going fast! Please call the church office at 514-634-2651 if you'd like to reserve some, or come by the church Monday to Friday, 9am – 1pm and ask for Susan.

### The Lachine Guignolée (Food Drive)

La guignolée



will be taking place on Sunday December 6th in the morning beginning at 10 am. Once again we will be organizing a district of the food drive out of Acadia hall. Feel free to come and see us if you wish to contribute either food and or cash.

*Jane Cowell Poitras and Sinclair Harris*

**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.** If 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.

### The Gift Tree is now in place in the Sanctuary



The tree decoration that you choose is yours to keep. Please 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. 6th**. 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.

### 400 Metres – formerly Mile of Pennies

The total in the fund is now at \$590.43. Both October and November were good months for our donors to “nickel and dime” the Fund. Thanks be to all!



### Reader's Digest February 1995.

As a Church secretary, I soon learned to be very careful while typing the weekly bulletin. One announcement was supposed to read " This Thursday the Ladies' Circle begins looking at 'Study of the Bible.'" But what I had typed was "This Thursday the Ladies' Circle begins looking at ' Studs of the Bible!'"

*Naughty...naughty..!* Michèle Bitauld

### Income Tax Receipts

For 2015 income tax receipt purposes, you are reminded that all contributions to Summerlea United must be received by December 31st.

**An Ecumenical Service** will take place St. Columba by the Lake , 11 Rodney, Pointe Claire, QC on Sunday, **December 27<sup>th</sup> 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 27th, a place to worship which will be lively and have a lot more people with whom to sing and pray. Join us.

### Syrian Refugee Crisis

Members of the Outreach Committee and the Board have been investigating the possibility of sponsoring a Syrian Refugee family. This would be done in coalition with other West Island congregations. There will be a congregational meeting following the **December 6<sup>th</sup>** service to discuss a proposal.

### Fruitcakes and cherry cakes

Help support the Lakeshore Civitan Club with the purchase of



Claxton fruitcakes – light or dark. A package of 3 cakes (1 lb cakes) is \$18.00. One pound cake is \$7. Cherry cakes (Grant's Bakery) are \$16 and shortbread is \$7. See Terry Jones or call him at 514-637-8817.

### A word from your Stewardship Chairperson

Envelopes will soon be available for those who requested offering envelopes on their stewardship form for the 2016 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 2016. Many thanks to those who have already done so.



### Bazaar report 2015

Three cheers to all who contributed once again to the success of the 2015 edition of Summerlea Bazaar. There was an abundance of gifts and goodies for all to purchase. A fine day ensured a steady attendance right up until closing time. Folk were telling us that they come from far and wide to visit us because of our reputation as a "Good Bazaar" It was especially nice to see the return of some of the young adults attached to our congregation. We really appreciated your help and energy! As of November 22nd, the total was almost identical to last year - over \$15,600. Thank you all! Next year's date will be **November 19th**. We look forward to seeing you then. *Sinclair, Nancy and Kate.*

*PS. We have decided to discontinue the White Elephant section next year, though we will continue to accept your more valuable items for Tempting Treasures.*



**E-Newsletters** - Many church members are now receiving their Newsletter by email. If you would like to receive yours via email, please send your request to Susan at the church office at [summerlea\\_united@videotron.ca](mailto:summerlea_united@videotron.ca) and your email address will be added to the list. *If you prefer a paper version, please ignore this, and we will continue to mail you your copy.*

### William Hunter Memorial Fund

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 you will find special envelopes 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 \$468.00 per child each year. They are baby boy, Santiago from Paraguay, now 19 months old, Angelica also from Paraguay is 11 years old and Noami from Ghana is a 14 year old girl. They deserve a chance to succeed in life. The path to their dreams will be a result of your help in providing food, access to education and healthcare. 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.

*Dale Romagosa*



**THANK YOU** to everyone, who worked tirelessly to make large and mini-meat pies this Fall. We had many workers and the job is so much easier when there are many hands....So thank-you again to everyone. We still have some pies, so please come by soon and pick some up to enjoy over the holiday period. Pies are \$9 for large pies or minis (4 per box).



**Octet Plus**, a semi-professional choir directed by Constance Osborne, will be giving two fund-raising Christmas concerts this year. The first is on Wed. **Dec. 2nd at 7:45pm** at St. John the Baptist Church, 233 Ste. Claire Ave., Pointe Claire in aid of the Low Vision organization (freewill offering). The second is on Sun. **Dec. 6th at 4pm** at ST. Thomas Church, 6897 Somerled Ave., N.D.G.. A donation of non-perishable food or a freewill offering for the Food Bank would be greatly appreciated. Further information: 514-634-6362.

### Music Notes



How time flies! We are already rehearsing for the Christmas season. I would like to thank all the choir members for the extra time and effort they are putting into making the Candlelight Service the success it always is. Again we are joined this year by Brad Moffat, Dik Harris, and Jean Stuart who have kindly volunteered to sing with us on Dec. 9th. Thank you so much.

I have had wonderful feedback from the Taizé worship service that Scott and I planned in November, so much so that we will be doing another service on Tuesday, December 15th at 7:15pm. Please tell all your friends---it is open to the wider community, also.

Kris Epps, who replaced me at the organ last spring, has been asked to do a short recital with his partner, Ashley (singer), at the Anniversary Dinner in February. Lucky us! Watch for notices for this event.

Also, Elias-Axel Pettersson, pianist, and Roland Arnassalon, violinist, will be returning to Summerlea to give a chamber music concert on Sunday, May 15th, 2016. I hope you will mark this date in your calendar. It should prove to be a terrific concert!

I wish you all the best of Christmases and good health and happiness in the New Year!

*Connie Osborne*

## Taizé Service

The Taizé Community is an ecumenical monastic order that originated in France in the 1940s. They have developed a form of worship called a **Taizé Service** that is centered on three components – candlelight, musical chants, and times of silent reflection. Their community has become an important site for pilgrimages and is very popular with today's youth.

Scott and Connie organized a Taizé Service at Summerlea on November 10<sup>th</sup>. It was held in the evening as candlelight is an essential part of the service. Attendees entered the sanctuary to see the flickering glow of over 100 votives. The 35-minute service offered participants a respite from their busy, hectic lives. A quiet place where one could focus and meditate - and know the peace of God.

Those who attended left Summerlea refreshed and saying, as Oliver Twist, "more please"!

*Susan Hawke*

*Note: Due to popular demand, a second Taizé Service is planned for Dec. 15.*

## The Dominique Literacy Centre in Haiti

Summerlea continues to donate generously to the Dominique Literacy Centre in Haiti. In January 2011 we made a basic commitment of a semi-annual donation of \$90 which has amounted to \$720 to date. We have succeeded in accumulating this sum as a result of the change dropped into the jar at the back of the Sanctuary.

In addition, over the past 5 years we have raised another \$3,101.40 through donations at soup lunches and plant sales.

The school can now accommodate 70 children and it enables them to have clean water, a hot meal and the opportunity to acquire basic literacy skills on a daily basis.

Your generous contributions do make a difference in the lives of these children. Each and every dollar donated goes directly to the school since there are no administrative fees.

The on-going generosity of Summerlea United Church was in evidence yet again at the lunch on

Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup> when the grand sum of \$160.00 was donated.

A most sincere thank-you to everyone who has contributed to this worthy cause.

## RECIPE CORNER

### Frozen Mint Meringue Torte

*This is a really nice dessert that can be made in advance to save some time over the holidays*

#### Meringue

¾ tsp cream of tartar  
4 egg whites  
1 cup of sugar

#### Filling – Topping

1 quart vanilla or chocolate ice cream softened  
4 egg yolks  
½ cup sugar  
¼ cup lemon juice  
1 tbsp green crème de menthe or 1 tsp mint extract  
grated lemon ring  
1 cup whipping cream, whipped  
shaved chocolate

#### Meringue

Add cream of tartar to egg whites, beat till foamy. Gradually beat in 1 cup sugar and continue beating until stiff and glossy. Place a sheet of aluminium foil on a cookie sheet. Spread meringue on foil to form a 10 inch round. Bake in a slow oven over 300 deg. For 45 minutes. Cool

#### Filling

Spread softened ice cream over cooled meringue. Place in freezer. Beat egg yolks slightly in top of a double boiler. Add ½ cup sugar, crème de menthe, lemon ring and lemon juice. Cook and stir till thickened. Cool. Combine whipped cream and lemon mixture, spread over ice cream. Top with shaved chocolate and return to freeze until 1 hour before serving time – place in fridge. Cut into wedges. 10 – 14 pieces

#### To store:

Place frozen torte in plastic bag in freezer. Also make into 2 tortes to serve smaller gatherings.



## A Christmas Truce

It happened on the Western front, five months into the first World War in 1914, and then only once in that war and never again, but it is not a myth as some would claim.

What happened was simple enough: One Christmas the soldiers put down their arms and rejoiced together.

Those Scottish, English, and German farm boys, whose increasingly industrialized cultures were in turmoil, were still so alike in tradition and spirit that on their favorite holiday they recognized their brothers in the opposing trenches. (Maybe enemy cultures will never again be so familiar.) According to the BBC, a thousand men -- officers and fighting men both -- decided to lay down their arms to share food, smokes, songs, and the holiday they held in common. You can still see the pictures they took that day after nearly 90 years.

The newspapers called it the "extraordinary armistice" and people took it for a sign of hope. A man who was there later wrote: "There was not an atom of hate that day . . . It was like the interval between a friendly boxing match."

But it didn't happen again. The war went on for 52 months -- five Christmases all told and four of them unremembered, except for that first Christmas when men created a Christmas truce.

### Cold and Flu Season

Temperatures across the country are beginning to drop. And as the holiday season approaches, our homes will be filled with warmth, holiday cheer and, of course, colds and flu.

Simple preparations for winter weather can be effective, but hats and gloves alone won't ward off illness. Four medicine cabinet must-haves this season include:

**1. Tea Bags.** In addition to making you feel better, the right kind of tea can prevent cold and flu symptoms. Regular intake of warm drinks helps increase mucous flow and provides relief. Although green tea is not prescribed as a remedy for diseases, it has many health benefits. Green tea helps prevent

a number of fungal, bacterial, and even viral infections, such as the common cold. Several varieties of green tea can be found at your local grocery or health food store.

**2. Cold Sore Medicine.** Two of the leading causes of cold sore breakouts are stress and illness, making it no surprise that sufferers experience outbreaks most often in the winter and around the holidays. Stock your cabinet with a medication that promotes fast healing.

**3. Vitamin C.** Research has proven vitamin C's ability to boost the immune system and shorten the life span of a cold. Vitamin C helps the body neutralize free radicals, resist infection, and bounce back from colds and flu. While it is helpful to eat vitamin C-rich foods, such as vegetables and fruits, having fortified vitamin C supplements on hand can give you an extra boost against infection.

**4. Antibacterial Hand Soap.** Regular hand washing is one of the best ways to keep infectious diseases from spreading. In a study by the American Academy of Pediatrics, proper hand washing decreased the spread of respiratory infections by 25 percent and diarrhea illnesses by 50 percent.

For additional information about helpful and preventive medications, consult your family doctor.

### A Holiday Message to You

Has the year moved quickly for you? Will you sit down to your holiday dinner and marvel that, so soon, the New Year is upon you? Or will you breathe a sigh of relief and say, "At last...."

It's strange how time moves at different speeds for different people in different years. Of course it all has to do with the challenges we face. If you have a son or daughter serving overseas, perhaps time has slowed to a crawl. If he or she is home for the holidays, maybe you wonder why time moves so quickly.

Whatever way time is flying for you this year, take time to relax, enjoy your family and friends, and remember that the holidays don't have to be picture perfect to be warm and enjoyable.

Thank you for your work this year. We hope you are able to enjoy the holidays and rest and relax during the holiday break.



## News and Notes

The office staff recently received a lovely visit from Heather and Pix, who dropped by the office before catching their flight back home to PEI. Thanks so much for taking the time to come by for a visit. So WONDERFUL to see you both!

We extend our sympathy to Caroline, Richard, Matthew and Gregory Legault upon the sudden death of Caroline's mother, Mildred "Millie" Ragan on October 4<sup>th</sup>.

Our sympathy is also extended to the family and friends of Rev. Jeff Barlow who died Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> and his partner Bernard Tremblay who died Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>. A joint funeral was held at St. James United on October 25<sup>th</sup>. Sadly, Susan White, a former member of Summerlea died on October 26<sup>th</sup>. Our condolences to Victor White and the family.

During the Advent season, please keep in your prayers our shut-ins as well as those who have lost a loved one this year.

*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 Ippersiel*

