



Spirited Summerlea

United Church of Canada

Newsletter

December 2016



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CALENDAR

December

- 04** **10:30am** **2nd of Advent**
 White Gift Sunday
- 11** **10:30am** **3rd of Advent**
11 Lakeshore Concert Band
 Christmas Concert
- 15** 7:30pm Candlelight Service
- 18** **10:30am** **4th of Advent**
 Choral Sunday
- 24** 7pm **Family Christmas Service**

JANUARY

- 01** 11am **Ecumenical service at**
 Dorval Strathmore
- 08** 10:30am **Sunday Worship**
- 15** 10:30am **Communion Sunday**
- 17** 2pm Executive Board Meeting
- 22** 10:30am **Soup Sunday**
- 29** 10:30am **Sunday Worship**

Elders' Corner:

Next Communion Service: November 27, 2016

EDITORS:

Jane Cowell Poitras,
Susan Hawke & Lynn Closs



When I was a little girl, I used to love the Advent season. The wonderful aromas from our kitchen as my mother made fruit cakes, mince pies and shortbread. The extra choir practices at church perfecting the descant notes in Christmas Carols. Trying on red cassocks to find one that would fit for Christmas services. Visiting our Jewish neighbours to celebrate Hanukkah – eating latkes and prune cookies and playing with the dreidel and receiving Hanukkah Gelt. Rehearsing for the Christmas pageant at school. Collecting food for the poor. Decorating the Christmas tree. Visiting Santa Claus at Eaton's. Going to Woolworth's to find affordable little presents for my family. Opening up a little door of my Advent Calendar every morning.

While it seemed to take forever to pass by, the Advent of my youth was a season filled with love and anticipation. Contrary to my childhood, Advent seems to fly by now and there never seems to be enough time! In addition to love and anticipation, anxiety and even frustration try to nudge their way into my life! To-do lists rule the day! Thank goodness for events such as Summerlea's Candlelight service that force me to stop and be still and to leave the frenetic pace behind – if even for a short while.

I think the challenge as an adult is to slow down the Advent season. To make time every day to think and reflect – even if it's only for a few minutes. I am not alone – many people – particularly women – find this period to be crazily hectic. I was surprised to learn that resources exist to help – yes – there are Advent calendars for adults. No – I am not talking about the trendy ones with a mini bottle of booze for each day of Advent – however tempting that may be!

For example, <http://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/advent/calendars/advent-calendar-for-adults> is a great site with a message for each day of Advent. Despite its decidedly Jesuit bent, I think the messages are good for all Christians. Last year, I heard about a new Advent Calendar in Canada. Last year, I could not get a hold of one – but this year I ordered one early.. Albeit it is a little pricy (\$55), but it contains a-never-before published short story for each day of Advent by a Canadian author. There is no guarantee of course, that these stories will necessarily have religious or even spiritual messages. But I am convinced that anything that slows me down even for ten minutes a day will be a good thing!

Jane Cowell

A Word from the Minister

During my time of training and preparation for ordained ministry back in the mid- to late-1980's, I did a year-long internship at Roxboro United Church. One of the things that I did that year was to put out a "suggestion box" for people to make suggestions of topics about which they would like to hear me preach a sermon. One of the suggestions was for a sermon about "religion and politics". To condense an entire sermon down to a few words, I basically said that, not only *can* we mix religion and politics, but as people of faith, we *must* mix them. I said this because, according to my understanding, our faith is meant to inform every aspect of our lives. This is what it means to "live our faith" in all of our daily situations, and to draw on our faith as a guide to how we are to live together in community with one another. It has not escaped my notice that some people who say that religion and politics should not mix are usually people who would like to carry out certain actions or express certain ideas that are anathema to our understanding of faith. And there are always those who say, "I am not a person of faith, and I don't want you to force your faith or beliefs on me." But in a democratic and civilized society, everyone, regardless of their religious affiliation, or lack thereof, is to be held to a certain standard of behavior that promotes justice, fairness, and equality for all.

But we church people often seem to want to be "nice", and not upset anyone, and we seem to shun

conversations where there is the potential for disagreement. Another event that happened while I was doing my internship at Roxboro is that I preached a sermon one Sunday, and while greeting people at the door after the service, a person who rarely came to church said to me, "I didn't agree with what you said in your sermon." At this point, I can't even remember what I preached about that Sunday, but I very much remember this interchange after the service. The person simply dropped this "bomb", then walked out of the church. I would have been happy (at a later, more appropriate time) to discuss this with that person, and even if we ended up disagreeing with one another, I would have been happy to live with that. So, in the end, while this person wanted to let me know that he did not agree with something I said, we never had the opportunity to discuss it.

However, there seems to be much discussion these days about the result of the November 8 Presidential election in the United States. Throughout the election campaign, it became clear that many people did not want to vote for Hilary Clinton because they did not trust her. So instead, they opted for a man who has shown himself to be racist, misogynist, homophobic, and xenophobic, and who, on many occasions, has publicly threatened to tear up existing trade agreements with Canada (this is just a short list, I could go on...). Looking back on it now, one can see the beginning of this earlier this year when the people of Britain voted to leave the European Union, spouting very much the same rhetoric about keeping foreigners out of "their" country and striving to keep the country what they consider to be "racially pure". This is familiar to us Quebecers because we have heard people talking about the "pur laine", of which we Anglophones are definitely not a part.

The election is now over and done, and it remains to be seen where all of this is going to go in the future. But I know there are many in the U.S. who are horrified and deeply saddened that this is the direction their fellow Americans have chosen to go. And just yesterday, in The Gazette, there was a story about a woman out west who is seeking the leadership of the national Conservative Party who seeks to run on a platform very similar to Donald Trump's.

Now more than ever, we need to draw on the principles of our faith to continue to build and

promote a society that is inclusive, open, and caring, and that values and strives for equality for all people. Of course, there are many people with no faith affiliation at all who seek to live by these principles, and I can only truly speak as a member of the Christian faith, but I know enough about the basic principles of many different faiths to know that we share a lot of these values in common. In times such as these, we maintain this separation between faith and politics at our peril. Whether our vision for the future of our society comes from a faith perspective or whether we are simply committed to the principles of human decency, those who are opposed to Donald Trump's brand of politics must continue to strive for a more loving and inclusive society, whatever our personal motivations might be.

Rev. Scott A. Patton.

Candlelight Service Thursday, December 15th at 7:30pm



This year's guest speaker will be the Reverend Ron Coughlin. 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 **Living Gifts** 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.

Amnesty International: Write for Rights Campaign 2016



December 10th is International Human Rights Day. Last year over 100 letters and copies were sent out to bring attention to the human rights abuses taking place in South America, Africa, U.S. and Canada. The Outreach Committee appreciated your support and once again will be seeking your support to sign some pre-prepared letters. More information will follow in an upcoming Sunday bulletin in December.

The Lachine Guignolée (Food Drive)

La guignolée



will be taking place on **Sunday December 4th** 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 will be 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 Sunday, **Dec. 4th**. 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.

Income Tax Receipts

For income tax receipt purposes, you are reminded that all contributions to Summerlea United must be received by December 31st 2016.

A word from your Stewardship Chairperson

Envelopes will soon be available for those who requested offering envelopes for 2017 on their stewardship form. 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 2017 if you have not already done so. Many thanks to those who have already returned their completed forms.



Summerlea Bazaar 2016

What another wonderful Bazaar Day!

Thanks in part to the beautiful weather, the crowds came out in droves and we were busy until closure at 2.00pm. There were some changes this year, and there will be more next year. It takes a small army of willing volunteers

to put on such a great community event and we appreciated seeing some new faces helping at various booths. Thank you! We hope you will be back next year!

We missed a few significant people this year due to illness. Thanks are especially due to those among you who stepped in and replaced our absent friends. Thanks are also due to the various Youth organisations who as always worked hard and cheerfully.

Total raised as of Bazaar closure last Saturday was \$14,767.52!!! We hope to see you all next year on November 18th.

Sinclair, Kate and Nancy

William Hunter Memorial Fund

This fund honours the memory of William Hunter, a former member of Summerlea who died suddenly in his first years as a United Church Minister. It is used to support our three sponsored children. We receive the loose offerings from the early service on Christmas Eve and the special envelopes you will find at the back of the church or with this newsletter. This is our only source of funding. All donations are tax deductible.

We currently sponsor three children overseas at a cost of \$468.00 per child per year, an annual cost of \$1,404.00 We need your help. They are a little boy from Paraguay, Santiago who is 2 years & 7 months, Angelica also from Paraguay is 12 years old and Naomi from Ghana is a 15 year old girl. Through your generosity, we are helping children and families in extreme poverty, providing hope with education, health, clean water and access to nutritious food.

Thank you for your continued support. *D.*

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 minis (4 per box), and \$10 for large “meatier than ever” pies.

The Idea Box

Are you inundated with address labels? I am. Numerous charities solicit me through the mail for a donation using as a sales pitch address labels. I receive hundreds of labels every year – more than I can ever use. After all there are only so many letters one can write! I just hate to throw them out but what other options are there?

I have found three uses for mine that save me time and energy so I thought I would pass them on. I pick the address label that has the biggest white space in order to write in my phone number. I keep a batch of them in my wallet and use them different ways. First of all they are great for filling out raffle tickets. We have all been in the situation of buying a “book of tickets” and then sitting there for ages filling in the stub. I also use them at the Lachine IGA. They have a box near the door where you can deposit your sales slip with the chance of winning the monthly draw. Seems every time I do this, either there is a line up to use the pen or the pen doesn't work. Smacking on a label and dropping it in the box is a real time saver. (Though admittedly, I have yet to win anything!) Finally, as I age, I spend more and more time filling out forms at different doctors' offices. These labels are a great way of completing the name and address portion of the form.

If any of you have other suggestions for them, we would be happy to print your ideas in the next issue of the newsletter.

Susan Hawke

Music Notes



As most of you know, I had hip surgery in October. By the time you read this, I will be back at work already. I would like to thank Kris Epps for ably handling the music and rehearsing the choir for the last six services. I know he enjoyed the experience and the choir enjoyed his direction and his wonderful sense of humour!

I will hit the road running with preparation for the Candlelight Service, and the Advent services, so you will see me soon. I missed choir and all the folk at Summerlea, and I'm very glad to be back!

Connie Osborne

The Lakeshore Concert Band, under the direction of Mark Dharmaratnam, is holding a Christmas Dessert Concert on Sunday, December 11, at 7:30pm. Tickets are \$15 (\$12 advance) for adults, and \$12 (\$10 advance) for seniors and children. The concert will take place at Summerlea United Church, 225 - 50th Avenue. For more information, call 514-428-0292.

Book Nook

The German Girl by Armando Lucas Correa. 2016.

This novel is based on the true story of the St. Louis, a German ship of 937 passengers, primarily Jewish, trying to escape Germany before the outbreak of World War II. The story is told from the perspective of a young girl named Hannah Rosenthal and her descendent Anna Rosen. It is a beautifully written book, both profoundly moving and at the same time heartbreaking. We follow the ship as it makes its way to various ports only to be refused the right to land. Eventually most of the passengers were returned to Germany where the majority perished in the Holocaust that followed. I was rather shocked to learn that Canada was one of the countries that refused to accept these refugees. To be sure, there are many things in our history that we cannot be proud of. Though based on World War II, there is much in this book that is applicable to our global refugee crisis of today where people are still cast adrift on the world's seas.

Susan Hawke

RECIPE CORNER

Pistachio Cranberry Icebox Cookies

Yield: Makes about 60 cookies.

Prep 25 mins

Chill 2 hrs

Bake 10 mins to 12 mins

Cool 1 mins

Red and green flecks of nuts and fruit make these buttery cookies perfect for a holiday cookie exchange or gift box. The recipe comes from the Inn and Spa at Cedar Falls in Logan, Ohio.

Ingredients

3/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
 1/3 granulated sugar
 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 1/2 teaspoon orange zest
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
 1/2 finely chopped pistachio nuts
 1/3 cup snipped dried cranberries

Directions:

In a large mixing bowl beat the butter with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add the sugar, cinnamon, orange zest and salt. Beat about 3 minutes or until light and fluffy, scraping sides of bowl occasionally. Reduce speed to low. Gradually beat in flour, 1/2 cup at a time, switching to a wooden spoon if necessary. Stir in pistachio nuts and cranberries; use hands to knead dough until smooth. Divide dough in half. On waxed paper, shape each half into an 8 1/2-inch-long log (about 1 1/2 inches across). Lift and smooth the waxed paper to help shape the logs. Wrap each log in plastic wrap or waxed paper. Chill about 2 hours or until dough is firm enough to slice.

Cut logs into 1/4-inch-thick slices. Rotate log while cutting to prevent flattening. (If dough gets too soft to slice, freeze briefly until it is firm enough to slice.) Place slices 1 inch apart on cookie sheets lined with parchment paper.

Bake in a 350 degrees oven for 10 to 12 minutes or until edges are firm and just starting to brown. Cool on cookie sheets for 1 minute. Transfer cookies to wire racks.

News and Notes

A Memorial Get-Together for Mlle Francine Constant, a retired teacher of Meadowbrook School who was in a tragic accident last year, will be held in the Maple Grove Gym (Meadowbrook School) on **Sat. Nov. 26th, 1-3pm**. Her close friend Miss Linda Brown and also retired teacher from Meadowbrook invite friends and students to come and share happy memories of Francine. They both had such a positive influence on our children. A small request from the

organizers of this event – Francine and Linda loved birds – there will be a Christmas tree in the lobby of the school to accept a bird ornament with your family name on it as a keepsake and memory of you for Miss Brown.

Many church members receive their Newsletter by email. If you would like to receive yours via email, please send your request to the secretary at summerlea_united@videotron.ca and your email address will be added to the list.

It has been a very difficult year for many members of the Summerlea family who have been ill, in and out of hospital, and some who are faced with the weekly challenges of medical treatments in hospital. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers as well as those on our Prayer List during the Advent season.

PRAYERS FOR HEALING AND SUPPORT

Michèle Bitauld
 Nancy Harvey
 Odette Falardeau
 Nancy Butt
 Patricia Leggett
 Natalie Moreau-Wightman

Friends and family

Myra Hawke (Susan's mother)
 Pauline Buckle (friend of Carol Brownlee)

*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

