



Spirited Summerlea

United Church of Canada

Newsletter

December 2019



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CALENDAR

December

- | | | |
|----|---------|--|
| 01 | 10:30am | 1 st of Advent/White Gift Sunday/ Food Sunday/Living Gifts |
| 07 | 7:30pm | Octet Plus Concert |
| 08 | 10:30am | 2 nd of Advent/Communion Sunday/ Living Gifts |
| 14 | 3:00pm | Christmas Carolling; meeting in Acadia |
| 15 | 10:30am | 3 rd of Advent/Lessons & Carols/ Write for Rights/Living Gifts |
| 18 | 7:30pm | Candlelight Service |
| 22 | 10:30am | 4 th of Advent |
| 24 | 7:00pm | Christmas Eve Family Service |
| 29 | 10:30am | Ecumenical Service at Dorval Strathmore United Church 310 Brookhaven, Dorval |



January

- | | | |
|----|---------|---|
| 05 | 10:30am | Epiphany Sunday |
| 12 | 10:30am | Baptism of the Lord Sunday/ Communion Sunday |
| 19 | 10:30am | 2 nd after Epiphany/Food Sunday |
| 26 | 10:30am | 3 rd after Epiphany |

EDITORS: *Jane Cowell Poitras,
Susan Hawke & Lynn Closs*

As a child, I looked forward to the arrival of the Eaton's And Sears Christmas catalogues every Fall. The newest shiny toys and games and the pretty party dresses all sparked my imagination and gave me ample fodder for my Christmas list that I submitted to Santa at Eaton's every year!

As I have aged, however, Christmas gifts are far less important to me. I still love to offer Christmas gifts, but my need to receive them has diminished with time. I have everything that I need and now that I am in a condo, I don't want more "stuff" cluttering my limited space!

One thing that has not changed however, is the excitement leading up to the Christmas season. Advent Sundays and their themes of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love still touch me deep inside. Parties with friends, buying gifts for poor children, Christmas baking, preparing to receive family, as well as Christmas music, are all part of the mix.

But I still miss the catalogues - more for nostalgic reasons than any other I suspect. But the internet has brought me a new Christmas joy to replace catalogues - Christmas advertisements from around the world. They make me laugh, they make me cry and they give me much to think about.

Here are some of my favourites:

World War I at the front: <https://youtu.be/NWF2JBb1bvM>

Alone at Christmas: <https://youtu.be/V6-0kYhqoRo>

Amusing: <https://youtu.be/kuRn2S7iPNU>

Love is a gift: <https://youtu.be/YRiarLe7aJo>

Heathrow: https://youtu.be/oq1r_M5a6uI

Sharing love: <https://youtu.be/jGY-T4W-BOc>

I hope some of these will put you in the Christmas mood as we prepare for the arrival of the Christ Child.

Merry Christmas!

Jane Cowell

A Word from the Minister

As the minister of Summerlea, I get a complimentary copy of the “Anglican Journal”. The December edition came across my desk recently, and my eye was caught by the headline, “You weep before you get to Bethlehem.” One of the subjects of the article was Canon Richard LeSueur, who leads trips to the Holy Land. According to the article, “there’s something he often says to groups of westerners when he first guides them into Bethlehem for Christmas: ‘I can’t show you the Bethlehem you imagined, because it doesn’t exist’.”

One person is quoted in the article as saying, “You get this juxtaposition of, it’s Christmas...and God is being born into this land, yet all you see while you’re driving through the checkpoint is all the security, with a lot of weapons.” This is what it means today to visit a place of tension between Israelis and Palestinians in an occupied land. Bethlehem is in the West Bank, a predominantly Palestinian territory captured by Israel during the 1967 Six-Day War and has been settled by Israelis in the decades since. At the time of the birth of Jesus, Bethlehem was also part of an occupied land. What we now refer to as The Holy Land was made a Roman province in the year 6 C.E., and Jesus was born into a time of intense resentment of the Roman occupation, as well as a time of great expectation of the coming of the Messiah.

We may not be planning a trip to the Holy Land, but many of us can relate all too well to this scenario. Despite the reality of what visitors to Bethlehem experience when they get there, we still have images in our minds of what we would like an experience of Bethlehem to be: a time of peace and quiet, the celebration of a new birth, with all the “friendly beasts” looking on, and a feeling of joy that God has chosen to come into this troubled world through that little baby, Jesus.

While it may be true that we here in Canada do not

live in an occupied land, we struggle with the same challenge of reconciling the reality of the state of our world with our desire to know in our hearts peace, love, and joy of the Christmas season. I believe this sentiment was captured very well by the hymn composer, Philips Brooks, who wrote the words to the now-famous hymn, *O Little Town of Bethlehem*. In the words of the hymn, Brooks gives us an image of Bethlehem as the place where “the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.” Visitors to Bethlehem in this day and age can speak meaningfully about the “fear” part of all this, but what about the hope?

I have never been to Bethlehem, but I often imagine what it would be like to be standing in the very place where Jesus was born into this world so long ago. I can imagine people going through all the checkpoints and experiencing the social and political tensions that are part of today’s reality, and many visitors have described how fearful and intimidating this can be. I can also imagine people walking into the Church of the Nativity and having all those fears melt away as people take in the magnitude of what that holy site represents.

At Christmastime, we symbolically partake in a visit to Bethlehem, and we usually encounter “roadblocks” or challenges along the way. The season of Advent is meant to help us prepare for the arrival of Christ in our midst, but (unless we’ve been living in denial) we know that this world is not ready to receive such an important guest. But it is those who have hope who are able to see the deeper meaning of Christ’s coming. Those who are without hope are those who have concluded that the world will only get worse, not better. But the birth of Christ is about hope: it is about the hope that comes from knowing that Christ was born into a world very different from our own, and surprisingly similar as well. Which is to say that, despite (or perhaps because of) the realities of the world, God chose to be born as one of us, and to come and share this world with us. In Advent, we prepare for Christ’s coming in many different ways, but we would be foolish to believe that all the problems of the world will be solved by December 24th, so that the next day, Christmas Day, we can welcome the Christ-child with open arms. We have all year to do the work of preparing for the Christ who comes into our midst again and again, but Christmas gives us that

opportunity, for a little while, to step outside of (notice I didn't say ignore) the world's many problems, to face the fears that live within us, and to rediscover the hope that comes from knowing that it is here, in this world, that God has chosen to be with us. And once we have taken some time to celebrate the birth of this special child, we can re-join the task of building the world that now we see only in our imaginations.

Rev. Scott A. Patton

Music Notes



Christmas is nearly upon us! Rehearsals are in full swing for the Candlelight Service on the 18th of December. My thanks to the choir members for all the work they are doing to prepare for this event. Again, this year we are joined by Dik Harris, Jean Stuart, Brad Moffat, Anne Allmark and Bonnie Jennings. A big thank you to all of them!

Many of you in the congregation have asked me over the last few years if Octet Plus, my chamber choir, could put on a Christmas concert here at Summerlea. I took that to heart and the group has decided to give a concert on **Saturday, Dec. 7th @ 7:30pm**. This concert is to raise funds for the projects that Summerlea undertakes locally and internationally. So please let your friends and relatives know about this festive evening. Thank you!

Our annual Christmas carolling for local seniors' residences will take place this year on **Saturday, Dec. 14th**. We will be meeting at **3:00pm** at the church. This is always an enjoyable evening, and much appreciated by the residents. Please join us!

My best wishes to everyone for the coming Christmas season.

Connie Osborne, music director

White Gift Sunday, December 1st

Every third Sunday is food Sunday. We collect non-perishable food. So far this year we have sent 1,196 items to the food bank at Resurrection church. We also collect money help purchase other necessary supplies.

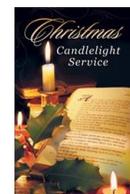


The food bank currently has 90 clients that collect a basket of food every 2 weeks. The need is constantly growing. In December special Christmas baskets are given to 200 families. Each basket receives a turkey, fresh fruits, and vegetables in addition to the usual items. Also included are 2 Christmas gifts for each of the 86 children. Summerlea was given gift tags for 38 children. Each tag has the gender and age of a child as well as the number of the Christmas gift basket it goes to. These gifts and non-perishable food items will be collected on December 1st, White Gift Sunday. All will be delivered to Resurrection Church along with a cheque for \$447.25. This will bring the total collected in 2019 to \$1,462.50. Aren't we lucky to be able to help support such a need in our community!

Candlelight Service

Thursday, December 18th at 7:30pm

Summerlea United Church welcomes the community to a joyful evening of carols, scriptures, meditation and candlelight to help put the glow of Christmas deep into everyone's heart. Bring your friends and neighbours for a beautiful service of Christmas hymns & music, followed by lovely refreshments in the church hall. The free-will offering will be much appreciated by those in need in our community.



Saint Columba House Living Gifts 2019

'Give a gift that will change someone's life – even in a small way.



Gifts include a card of acknowledgement made with original Hand in Hand Art on the front of the card with a description of the living gift you have chosen inside. You will receive a tax-deductible receipt for the full amount of your gift and a thank-you letter.

Gift packages available during coffee hour & office hours Mon-Fri 8:00am – Noon

\$15 Donation - Art supplies for Hand-In-Hand Program (Intellectually challenged adult)

\$20 donation - Snacks and hot meals for a child for 1 week in the Alternate School Preschool

\$30 donation - Hot meals for 1 month for a low-income person.

\$36 donation - Feed a family of 6 Christmas Dinner

\$50 donation - 5 hours of one-on-one tutoring for children struggling with reading and mathematics.

\$75 donation - Recreational activities for 3 seniors in our Senior Connection Program.

Income Tax Receipts

For income tax receipt purposes, you are reminded that all contributions to Summerlea United must be received by December 31st, 2019

THANK YOU to everyone who helped prepare the tourtières this Fall. We had many volunteers come forward once again, and it made the preparation so much easier. We have only a few pies left, so hurry if you don't want to miss out on these delicious Summerlea Tourtières. They are a wonderful addition to your festivities.



Summerlea Bazaar 2019

Bazaar Saturday was very cold but fortunately **no snow**. A steady stream of old and new friends came to shop, enjoy a delicious lunch and chat. One of the best parts of the bazaar is talking to old friends and catching up on the news.

There were two new attractions at this year's bazaar. Hot chocolate was available with the hot dogs, a great addition on a cold day. The parlour was set up for children with coloring books, crayons, puzzles and face painting. You may have seen the elephants, unicorns and butterflies selling cookies and popcorn.

We have an amazing congregation! **Everyone** helped and ensured the success of our bazaar. We were fortunate to have the help of the Pathfinders, Guides and Scouts. They worked hard and cheerfully.

See you all next November.

Sinclair and Nancy

Amnesty International - Write for Rights.

Every year on December 10th, activists in more than 80 countries gather on their own or in large and small events to press governments to respond to a human rights concern on selected high-priority cases. Once again Summerlea we will be joining about 300 other groups across Canada to add our voices.

Prepared letters will be available for you to sign during coffee hour on December 15th.

William Hunter Memorial Fund

Thanks to all our generous supporters of the William Hunter Memorial Fund which honours the memory of William Hunter. He was a former member of Summerlea who died suddenly in his first year as a United Church Minister. We receive loose offerings from the service on Christmas Eve and the special envelopes you will find at the back of the church or with this newsletter. These offerings are our only

source of funds to support our overseas family and other local children's needs. All donations are tax deductible.

We currently sponsor three children at a cost of \$468.00 per child, an annual commitment of \$1,404.00. They are Alba Abigail, a 3-year girl from Paraguay, Santiago, a 5-year-old boy also from Paraguay and Naomi, an 18-year old girl from Ghana.

Through your generosity these children will receive an education, medical care, clothing and improved nutrition. Together we are making a difference in the lives of children and families in developing countries. Thank you again for your continued support.

Dale Romagosa

A word from your Stewardship Chairperson

Envelopes will soon be available for those who requested offering envelopes for 2020 on their stewardship form. If you've not yet requested envelopes and would like some or if you would like to begin or change to PAR (pre-authorized remittance) please call John Coffin at 514.634.1116 and he will arrange this. A gentle reminder to please fill in and return your stewardship commitment forms so that the church can prepare its budget for 2020. Many thanks to those who have already returned their completed forms.

Girl Guides weekend at Camp Wa-Thik-Ane



with Sinclair,
celebrating a
birthday!

"You are never
too old to make
snow angels"

Scouts at Summerlea

Thank you to the scouts, venturers and their leaders for their help setting up tables and chairs for our events at Summerlea.

Activities participated in as well as upcoming;

Sep 15 all scouting sections participated in the shoreline clean-up organized by GRAME

Sep 21-22 seven leaders & two youth attended a first aid course

Oct 4-6 scouts and venturers had a great camp at Apple Hill, Ont.

Oct 12 cubs visited Lachine fire station

Nov 1-2 cubs will have a sleepover at the church

Nov 5 cubs visit Lachine city hall (no meeting at the church)

Nov 9 scouts and venturers will help with the bazaar cleanup

Nov 10 all scouting sections will participate in the Legion's Remembrance Day ceremonies

Nov 15-16 beavers will have a sleepover at the church

Nov 17 scouts and venturers will visit the Holocaust museum

Dec 1 all sections will participate in the Lachine Guignolée

Dec 10 all scouting sections Christmas party

Jan or Feb plans for all section weekend linking camp are underway

Feb BP Sunday service

Mar 21-22 all section visit to the War Museum in Ottawa

Is Xmas in Poor Taste?

During the holidays, a dialogue sometimes starts around why people use Xmas instead of the word Christmas. Some folks think that using Xmas is

a sign of disrespect for Christ. Actually Xmas is an abbreviated form for Christmas. The word Christmas means Christ's Mass. The Greek letter that symbolizes Christ is "X" or Chi. This is the first letter in the word for Christ. This is not an English letter "x" which is a part of our alphabet. Therefore the "X", which should be capitalized, is used as a shortened form of the word Christmas.

Adapted from an unknown congregation's bulletin.

Book Nook

Educated by Tara Westover



In the early 2000s, **Tara Westover** was a preteen living in Idaho with her fundamentalist Mormon family. They were isolated from other people, even her extended family, except for at church. Her father didn't believe in doctors or "government schools," putting the children to work in a family-owned junkyard. Eventually, she and a brother taught themselves enough math to attend Brigham Young University. When Westover arrived, she fully believed she would return home eventually, marry, and live in the way her father intended.

Today, Westover lives in a flat in London. She visits doctors, has a doctorate from Cambridge, and had a

fellowship at Harvard University. How she made that disorienting jump is the subject of her memoir. While disturbing at times, a real page-turner I could not put down.

The Home for Unwanted Girls

by Joanne Goodman

This novel takes us back to the darkest days of the Duplessis Era in Quebec prior to the Quiet Revolution. We are introduced to a young girl named Maggie, hopelessly in love with her next-door neighbor Gabriel, who gets her pregnant. Outraged at her embarrassing situation, Maggie's parents send her away to have the child and give it up immediately for adoption, all unbeknownst to Gabriel.

Next, we meet Elodie, Maggie's scorned child, who we discover has ended up in an orphanage, not happily adopted out as Maggie was led to believe. At first Elodie leads a fairly happy life, she's taken care of by nuns who do a relatively loving job of raising

her and the other wards. But, due to a political decision, some Catholic orphanages in Quebec are transitioned to mental asylums because they receive more funding per child from the government. Once this occurs, Elodie is essentially labelled as mentally insane, tasked with physically caring for adult mental patients who are forced into the same building, and sexually, physically and verbally abused on a regular basis by the staff members (including the clergy). A real eye-opener that poignantly tells the tale of a Duplessis orphan. *Jane Cowell*



RECIPE CORNER

White Chocolate Raspberry Love Notes

1/4 cup butter
 1 pkg. (170 g) *Baker's* White Chocolate, divided
 2 eggs
 1/2 cup granulated sugar
 1 cup all-purpose flour
 1/2 tsp. salt
 1/2 cup *Kraft* Pure Red Raspberry Jam

HEAT oven to 325°F. Grease and flour 8-inch square baking pan.

MELT butter and 3 squares chocolate together over low heat or in microwave on **MEDIUM** for 2-3 minutes.

BEAT eggs until foamy in a large bowl. Gradually add sugar, beating at high speed until lemon coloured. Stir in melted chocolate mixture. Add flour and salt; mix at low speed until just combined. Chop remaining chocolate and stir into flour mixture.

SPREAD half of batter into prepared pan.

HEAT jam in microwave on **MEDIUM** for 2 minutes. Spread jam evenly over batter. Add spoonfuls of remaining batter over jam and zigzag knife through batter to marble.

BAKE for 30 - 35 minutes or until toothpick inserted in centre comes out clean.

Truffles au Chocolat

2 squares of chocolate 1 oz. each – non sweet
 1/4 cup of unsalted butter
 3/4 cup icing sugar

3 egg yolks
 1/2 tsp almond extract or vanilla

Melt chocolate in double boiler. Cream the butter, add little by little the icing sugar stirring well between each addition. When very smooth add egg yolk one by one. Mix well. Then add melted chocolate. Let cool till mixture is firm.

Take tsp by tsp, shape a small ball and roll into fruit sugar. Makes about 25. Keep refrigerated.

Let Every Day be Christmas

By Norman W Brooks



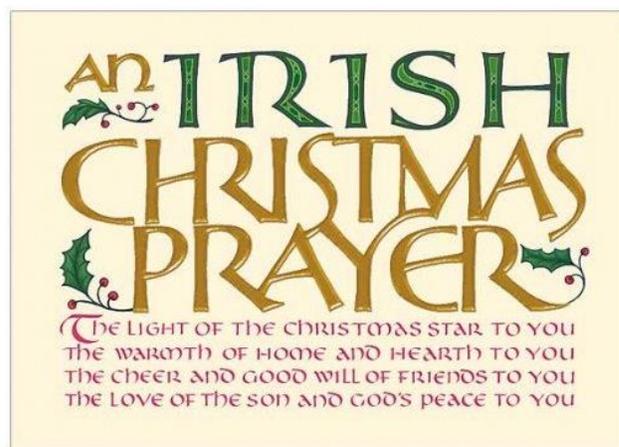
Christmas is forever, not for just one day,
 for loving, sharing, giving,
 are not to put away
 like bells and lights and tinsel, in some box upon a shelf.

The good you do for other is good you do yourself.

News and Notes

Baptism welcoming **Eva Zahir Bourbeau** into God's Loving Family took place on Sunday, November 24th.

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



Wishing you all love, peace and good health.

Colleen Kilkenny