



The Sunday Plus

Parkminster United Church
Newsletter –
December 2017

YOU ARE NOT ALONE. COME SHARE THE JOURNEY

From Revs Joe & Heather

It has been a great joy to serve as your ministry team and get to meet and know you over the last two months. It certainly has been an eventful time, with the discovery of the graffiti at our front door and the subsequent media coverage. It helped to set a positive tone for our shared ministry as we came together to respond to an act of ignorance and hate creatively and lovingly. Perhaps that's not a bad way to look at what God does for us in the seasons of Advent and Christmas.

At Advent we speak of waiting, longing, yearning for the coming of a new time for all God's people. We remember the promise that arrived at the annunciation, "Do not fear, for I bring good news!"

What is the good news that we are waiting for? How will we be faithful witnesses to the promises of God in this time? What is the prayer that is in your heart as we move toward Christmas in this broken world?

In her poem *Salutation*, poet Luci Shaw writes about two pregnant women, Mary and Elizabeth, as they meet in a doorway, each carrying in her belly, a new beginning. The last line, "And my heart turns over when I meet Jesus in you" reminds us, that at Advent we are waiting to see Jesus—not only as a newborn child, but in all whom we encounter.

We must be willing to see Christ enfleshed in each and every one or we will miss the message of Christmas. The birth of Jesus was not a one-time event, but a ritual we repeat over and over again, to remind us that every heart is called to prepare a room, as creation groans in eager longing for justice, peace and the love which shatters oppression, hatred and violence.

Come join the long journey toward Bethlehem where the star threatens to shine through the darkness, casting the light of peace and justice into the world.

Blessings to you all this season and always,
Rev. Joe and Rev. Heather



Photos contributed by Lee Osborne and Jennifer Allan.

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Notes from the Chair

In this season of peace and goodwill Parkminster can celebrate the presence of both. **Goodwill**: the beautiful tree and decorations done by the UGO-IGO group which symbolizes the joy and caring that is Parkminster. **Peace**: fall events (from the graffiti) that demonstrated our living a life of loving influence in the world. We continue to show ourselves as generous in spirit, supportive of each other and willing to lead the way in reaching out to marginalized and disempowered peoples. We have done so with grace and humility. We have done so with love.

In October, Joe and Heather led us in a celebration of community and connection. The graffiti art meant to vilify the outreach of the Inclusive Ministries' Committee was transformed into community building. The graffiti raised our profile, drew in strangers and publicized the presence of a safe and welcoming space open to all.



The outpouring of support continued as we created graffiti art and welcomed approximately 60 people to our potluck, most of whom were in our church for the first time.

In November, those Council members and Committee Chairs who spent the day visioning realized that people of all ages, in all of their diversity are Parkminster's priority. So, our goal is to figure out how to meet the challenge of building the relationships that will make people who come through our door eager to become active participants in our community. How do we connect with those already here? One way is by carving out more time to spend with each other. How we do this is now a priority of Council and Committees.

It is becoming clear that as a congregation we want relationships in community to be at the heart of who we are.

Outreach therefore belongs to all of us and must become the lens through which we plan and organize our events. This is why Council will be seeking your input as to our next steps with the food trucks.

Continuing to have food trucks involves thinking about how they help us build community. How do they help us connect with our neighbours and each other? This initiative could become an important ministry but only if we have the time and resources to devote to it.



Mahatma Gandhi famously said, "Be the change you wish to see in the world."

I think we have begun the journey. I wish you all a Blessed and Happy Christmas with family and friends. May the peace of Christ be with you!

Maedith Radlein
Chair of Council

Concerned About Capital Gains on Publicly-Traded Shares You Own?

If you are, here is a solution which also enables you to enact the spiritual practice of generosity by making a gift to Parkminster United Church.

By working with the United Church of Canada Foundation (the Foundation) and your broker, you transfer your shares to the Foundation. The Foundation then sells the shares and sends the proceeds to Parkminster.



The only cost is \$9.95 charged by the Foundation's discount broker to sell the shares.

In addition to the spiritual benefits of being generous, there is also a tax benefit to this form of gift.

You will not be taxed on the capital gains resulting from the sale of your shares. You will receive a tax credit receipt for the full market value of the securities at the close of the markets on the day they are received at the Foundation.

If you need more information, contact Parkminster Treasurer, Jack Reynolds.

Photo directory

It's time! Look forward to a new photo directory early in the new year. The photographer will be at Parkminster on March 20 - 24 and April 4 - 7. Weekday appointments will be between 1:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. and Saturday appointments between 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Sign-up and order sheets will be available in late February.

We will be looking for volunteers to work with the photographer checking people in for appointments etc.

Each family gets a free photo directory. Each person gets a free 8" x 10" photograph.

Photo packages will be available for order should you want to have more pictures.

Christmas programs

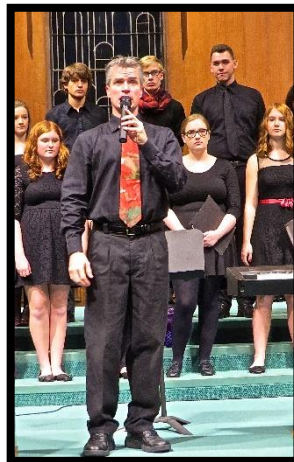


Saturday, December 2 YOUNG FAMILY ADVENT/CHRISTMAS PARTY

5:30pm – Join us to celebrate this special time of year together! We'll enjoy a meal together, as well as fun activities to get everyone in the spirit! All are welcome - please invite other families who might like to join us that evening. RSVP to Rev. Heather at: revheather.parkminster@gmail.com

Sunday, December 17 – ADVENT 3; WHITE GIFT SUNDAY

10:00am – Worship with Christmas Pageant: Please plan to bring in gifts of socks and underwear, shaving and hygiene supplies (razors, shampoo, deodorant), and bus tickets or gift cards (Walmart, Tim Horton's, Zehrs, Sobey's) in support of oneROOF on this Sunday. Items will be collected during the service that morning and do not need to be wrapped. oneROOF Youth Services is committed to providing for the safety, support and overall well-being of youth who are experiencing homelessness, and youth who are at-risk of homelessness, aged 12-25, in Waterloo Region.



Sunday, December 17 ONE DECEMBER NIGHT CONCERT

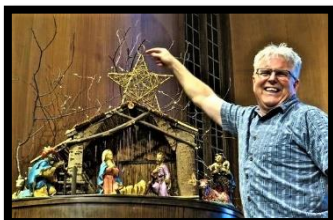
7:00pm – An amazing night of music showcasing the musical talents of both Parkminster and Bluevale Collegiate to put you in the Christmas spirit. Tickets: \$10/person or \$20/family. You may purchase the night of the concert or by contacting Bob Hudgins at 519-741-4244.



December 3 to 17 *MITTEN TREE *

All are invited to bring in socks, mitts/gloves, hats and neck warmers to help fill our mitten tree located in the upper hall! Donations will be taken to oneROOF after December 17. Thank you to our children and youth for helping to create special decorations for the mitten tree this year!

Advent Services



Sunday, December 3 ADVENT 1

10:00am – Worship with Communion

Sunday, December 10 ADVENT 2

10:00am – Worship

Thursday, December 21 – THE LONGEST NIGHT

7:00pm – For some it is difficult to partake in the feelings of good cheer expected of us during the Christmas season. Christmas can bring with it reminders of pain, loss and emptiness. It is helpful to know we are not alone in these times. Please join us at Parkminster to gather in worship, share fellowship, and light a candle acknowledging our grief and loss.

Sunday, December 24 – ADVENT 4 & CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

10:00am – Worship

7:00pm – Family Service that is child friendly with lots of music

10:00pm – Quiet and reflective service with candlelight and carols

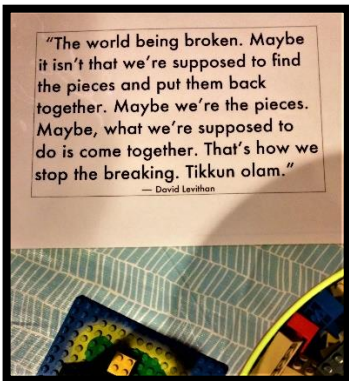
Sunday, December 31 - EPIPHANY

10:00am – Regular Worship Service with Rev. Heather (Rev. Joe on holiday)

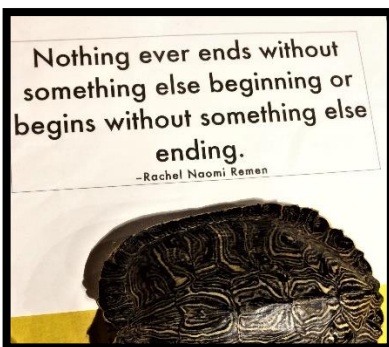
God is calling us to be ...

On Saturday, November 18, fourteen committee chairs, council members, Joe and Heather, spent the day with Kim Uyede-Kai, Minister for Congregational Support, Hamilton Conference.

The goal was community building – creating a space where we could not only share our hopes for Parkminster but also think about what we need to do to get there. We reflected on whether we are who we said we wanted to be – a theologically evolving community of faith (2013 Vision Statement).

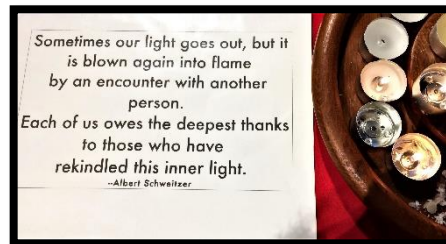


It was an interactive session. Scripture (Isaiah 30:15-21) reminded us that to grow we must listen to each other and welcome challenges - "the bread of adversity and the water of affliction." Activities reflected the diversity within our group and in the church.



Visuals and quotes helped us to reflect on our lives and what we bring to PUC. We discussed Parkminster's strengths and its areas for growth. We individually looked at the 2013 vision statement, Vision for our Journey into the Future and identified our priorities.

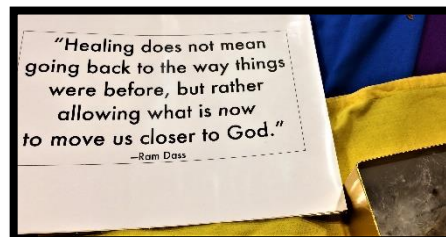
We noticed that an important group in our congregation, fragile seniors, was missing from that statement: this omission will be corrected. It was interesting that without exception everyone saw children, youth and young families as our greatest priority.



The top four priorities were:

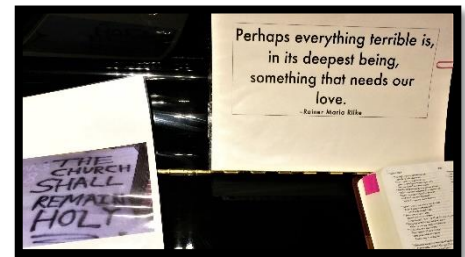
- nurturing children and youth (young families);
- being welcoming, open and inclusive; celebrating diversity; and
- nurturing spiritual vitality/spiritual search.

We acknowledged the importance of deep listening before planning. We also recognized the developing spirituality of our congregation – a different place from five years ago.



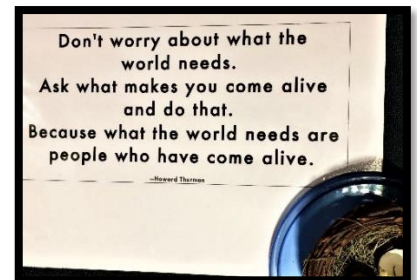
For the culminating activity we were divided into two groups. Each individual chose two items from a display that represented one strength and one weakness of Parkminster. We said a word or two about them and then as a group built a 'diorama' of what we thought our future community of faith could look like: a future where our weaknesses had become strengths; a future where people of all ages, not "doing", had become our mission, our raison d'être in God's world.

As the new governance structure of the United Church of Canada comes into being, we see ourselves as well positioned for the transition to local churches becoming communities of faith.



We have begun to connect with other churches for mutual support and to work with community agencies where we don't have the resources to do the work ourselves. How then do we move forward and know what to discern?

- Pay attention
- Resource check (be realistic)
- Listen and reflect together
- Let some things go without guilt
- Follow our (organic) passion
- Ask, "What is God doing and how do we cooperate?"



At the end of the day we felt we had built new relationships, strengthened old ones, connected in a new way with Heather and Joe and left feeling that we all had a common purpose: a purpose that we understood and believed in; a purpose that we must now begin to realize.

God is calling us to be an evolving community of faith inspired to embrace our future.

