



Being Christ's Light in the World *Christmas Hamper Program*

A huge thank-you to all Westminster participants in this year's hamper program.

The 2015 project began last winter with the distribution of tin cans for coin collection, and between the contents of the tin cans and specific donations to our Hamper Program, we collected over \$8,000.

We had our usual annual "counting evening" in late November and thanks to very few pennies, we did it in record time. Here's what your donation dollars were able to do for others...

75 grocery hampers were filled for families

(each box included a Loblaw's card so families could purchase additional items)

158 children received Individual gifts

307 adults (*family members of the children*) **knew a brighter Christmas**

In total, 465 people received the love of Christ that Westminster offered!

Thank you to everyone who helped this project to succeed once again and to all who helped us share the true Christmas spirit...

...the volunteers: organizers, counters, packers, lifters and delivery drivers

...those who carefully and lovingly chose names and gave gifts

...those who financially supported this project

...Greg's No-Frills in Whitby (Thickson/Dryden) for their below cost contributions

...Mackie's Moving for their generous donation of boxes



guest speaker

A Wellness Event

Plan to attend a presentation on January 10th
Being Present: An Introduction to Mindfulness.

After service this Sunday, there will be a sandwich luncheon in The Founders' Room.
Beginning at 12:30pm, David Clarke,
Co-ordinator of Communications and Training for Durham Mental Health Services,
will speak on this mental health topic.

Last January, Mr. Clarke addressed the topics of depression,
and coping strategies for mental health in a very well received talk.

We hope you will join us for this special presentation!

WINE, WOMEN and the WORD

Wine, Women and The Word is a monthly bible study that is open to all women.
These gatherings take place on the 3rd Tuesday of each month (unless otherwise noted) and all are
welcome to this informal time of exploring what God's Word means for you in today's world.

Our next meeting is on **Tuesday, January 19th** in the **Founders Room** from **7:00pm-9:00pm**.

Our topic this month is: "Mary, Mother of Jesus", and the scripture reading to prepare is:
Luke 1:26-33...Luke 1:34 and Galatians 4:4.

If you have a bible, please bring it, as we will be reading more passages at our gathering.
We always have a lively discussion and we hope to see you there!

To learn more, please call Carol at 905-706-9608.





New Group — Women's Wellness

Taking care of yourself can be tricky at times. This small group will give you a chance to relax, rejuvenate, centre yourself and focus on your well-being...on your Mind, your Body and your Spirit! Emphasis will be placed on sharing techniques and strategies, including exercises to nurture physical and emotional health. *Some of the topics may include: how stress can manifest in our bodies, the importance of healthy relationships, gaining personal power and strength and Yoga, including physical postures, breathing exercises and meditation.*

Dates: Fridays...Jan. 8, 15, 22 and 29, from 6:30pm - 8:00pm.

There is no cost to register, but **registration is required** and spaces are limited.

For more information or to register please contact **Romain** at: easeforward@gmail.com

Returning Group — Senior Fitness

Back by popular demand, this group is open to Seniors and will take place in the gym at Westminster on **Thursday mornings from 10:30am – 11:30am**. This group will run weekly (8 weeks) from **January 14th – March 3rd** and as with all our Small Groups, there is **no cost** for this activity.

Registration is required and spaces are limited, so please contact **Katie** at ktcraigb@rogers.com as soon as possible to register or to obtain more information.

LifeKeys...Discover Who You Are!

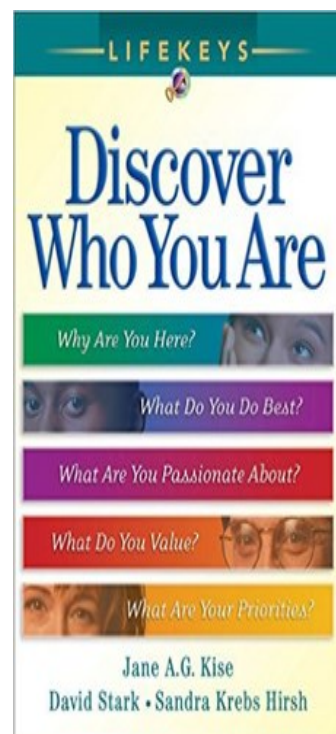
Why Are You Here?
What Do You Do Best?
What Are You Passionate About?
What Do You Value?
What Are Your Priorities?

If you have ever wondered about any of these questions, or if you just want to explore the awesome gifts that God has given you, then join Cathy Shaw, our Minister of Faith Formation for this five week program.

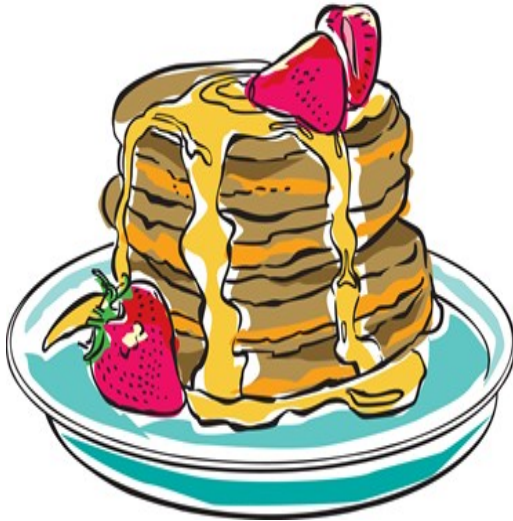
Sunday afternoons...
January 17th — February 14th
12:00pm - 2:00pm

(Light refreshments will be available, but please feel free to bring your lunch if you would like to do so).

This Small Group is offered at no cost but **registration is required and spaces are limited**, so sign up today by contacting Cathy, 905 723 6442 or cshaw@westminster-uc.ca



Shrove Tuesday



PANCAKE SUPPER

Mark Tuesday, **February 9th** on your calendar!

Westminster's annual pancake supper will take place
in our gym between
5:30pm and 7:00pm.

You're invited to feast on pancakes –
plain, blueberry and chocolate chip
– and sausages, of course!

A free will offering will be gratefully
received at the door.

If you're interested in helping out with
this fellowship event, we need pancake flippers,
servers, bussers and dishwashers.

Please contact Bev to volunteer at 905-432-9249

Scent Free ZONE

LET'S KEEP EVERYONE BREATHING WELL!

**FOR THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF ALL ,
PLEASE REFRAIN FROM USING SCENTED PRODUCTS WHILE AT WESTMINSTER!
THANK YOU!**

BRRR...It's Cold out there!



We're walking again...so come join the team!

Last year, Westminster United Church registered a Team for the
Coldest Night of the Year Walk

...and what a wonderful walk it was...a little tough to push through,
but certainly worth every step!

As a team, we doubled our numbers of members from our first year,
so we had 29 people sign up for our team.

With their donations, our generous congregation
and a special contribution in memory of a loved one,

we raised \$8,439

(up from \$3,358 the previous year)

for The Refuge

and the good works they do for the homeless youth
in our community!

Jesus was an advocate for those who were hurting, alone, hungry, lost and dealing with
tough circumstances in life...so that is what we are called to be as well...lending a hand to lift
someone up and letting this world know that they are not alone and not forgotten...
that God cares...and that we do too!

So, come join us! Walk with us!

Donate to our team! Pray for those who use the Refuge and for those who offer support
...and pray for our team! Any way you wish to help will be greatly appreciated!

To join our Team or to make an online donation, just go to
www.coldestnightoftheyear.org,
search for our team (Westminster United Church) and follow the prompts.

If you have issues while trying to register, contact Cathy Shaw (Team Captain).

You can donate online or visit our display and our team members
in the gym following worship on February 7th and 14th.

They will be thrilled to share their experience with you and
gratefully receive any and all donations for this worthy cause.

The Coldest Night of the Year is a fun, family-friendly walking event.

So, come for a walk, make a difference, make new friends
and help the Refuge keep their doors open to those who need them the most!
You'll be glad you did!

Hope to see you on Saturday, February 20th!

**In life, there are dreary, empty days and there are exciting, full days.
You will experience both, for you cannot choose one above the other.**

May your full days be many.

J a M (Jesus and Me) - News

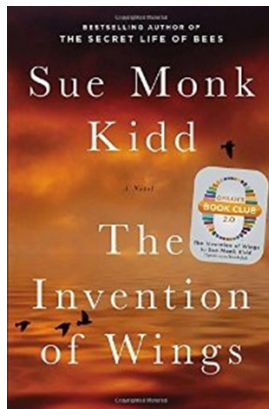
January 10 – All J.a.M Classes Resume!

Throughout the month of January, our program will be focused on the Miracles of Jesus.



Book Club

Our next meeting of the Book Club is Wednesday January 27th, 2016 from 1 to 3 pm at the church. For this meeting, we are asking people to read the book: The Invention of Wings, by Sue Monk Kidd.



In the early 1830s, Sarah Grimké and her younger sister, Angelina, were the most infamous women in America. They had rebelled so vocally against their family, society and their religion that they were reviled, pursued and exiled from their home city of Charleston, South Carolina, under threat of death.

Their crime was speaking out in favour of liberty and equality and for African American slaves and women, arguments too radically humanist even for the abolitionists of their time. Their lectures drew crowds of thousands, even (shockingly, then) men, and their most popular pamphlet directly inspired Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin--published 15 years later.

These women took many of the first brutal backlashes against feminists and abolitionists, but even their names are barely known now. Sue Monk Kidd became fascinated by these sisters, and the question of what compelled them to risk certain fury and say with the full force of their convictions what others had not (or could not).

She discovered that in 1803, when Sarah turned 11, her parents gave her the "human present" of 10-year-old Hetty to be her handmaid, and Sarah taught Hetty to read, an act of rebellion met with punishment so severe that the slave girl died of "an unspecified disease" shortly after her beating.

Kidd knew then that she had to try to bring Hetty back to life ("I would imagine what might have been," she tells us), and she starts these girls' stories here, both cast in roles they despise. She trades chapters between their voices across decades, imagining the Grimké sisters' courageous metamorphosis and, perhaps more vitally, she gives Hetty her own life of struggle and transformation.

For more information or to join our Book Club, please contact Susan at 905-493-3122.



...that the Outreach Committee and others did a wonderful job with the Hamper Project this year? There were 73 families who had their Christmas enriched due to the generosity of Westminster folk. Our thanks to all of you.

...that the Chair"person" Group removed the chairs in the Sanctuary in December to enable the use of the Labyrinth as a Spiritual practice during Advent. The removal of the many chairs also allowed the Sanctuary floor to be waxed. Our thanks to this team for the chair moving and the Virgilio (our interim Custodian) for his waxing skills.

...that Jeanne Yee has been at church this month and we are so very glad to see her looking well. Keep it up, Jeanne!

...that Kerry Delaney is now walking with a cane and not all of the previous contraptions as she continues to make progress with her therapy. All the best, Kerry.

...that Emma Cullen has made it to the Senior Ladies Skate Canada National Championships taking place in Halifax in January. Emma will be competing on January 22 and 23. Good luck, Emma!

...that December is a crowded, busy month for most people. This certainly applies to the staff of Westminster. We, as a congregation, are so very grateful to all of our staff who so willingly do their regular work but also find time to do the extra work that comes their way as well, especially at this time of the year.

...that our Youth Group will continue in the New Year with a little different format and leadership. We are thankful to Yvonne McNulty for leading through the fall with the assistance of Annabelle Wilson. More news is to follow.

A note from our Treasurer...



If you use envelopes for your offering,
they have a new look.

There is no date on them, so there is no waste!

You can use them until they are gone.

Don't worry...when you run out,
there will be a card in the box to order more.

Thank you for giving so generously
to the worship and workings
of your Westminster!

**"Don't look for the ninety percent of the darkness in a person's soul.
Look for the ten percent of light they have left, then lend them yours
because light was meant to be shared."**

Shannon L. Alder

Affirming Team Update

Westminster's A-Team continues to highlight inclusivity within our church congregation, with special emphasis on the Affirming process and the LGBTQ community.

Look again for the Affirming Team's information table in the narthex after New Year's. Also, there will be several testimonial presentations in January and February before the Affirming vote at Westminster's Annual Congregational Meeting (ACM) on Sunday, **February 28th**.

If this vote is successful, Westminster will become a registered Affirming United congregation. This will include an annual \$100 registration fee from our church--- which helps Affirming United with its ongoing education process within the United Church, including regional workshops, promotional materials, administration, etc.

On February 28th, only WUC members can vote. There will be no proxy votes. You must attend that Sunday's service to vote. If you want to vote, make sure you are properly registered as a Westminster United Church member. Check with the church office. There is still time to transfer a membership from another United Church congregation, re-affirm your membership, etc.



Westminster's



Coming Soon...a Fun, Family Fundraiser!

It's time to reveal your hidden talents!
Whether you are 5 or 95,
there is a spot for you on Westminster's chancel stage on

Saturday, January 30, 2016

7:00 pm.

Dust off your dancing skills, your singing,
instrumental or acting talents, your gift for magic, your ?

Register to participate on:

Thursday, January 7

(6:30 pm -7:30 pm in the sanctuary)

Sunday, January 10

(after service in the gym)

Please note that there will be a \$5.00 registration fee per person

For Tickets

(please listen for announcements)

Adults - \$10

Students and Seniors - \$5

Preschool aged children - free

Family maximum - \$30

Refreshments will be available for sale during intermission.

All proceeds will go to the church's general fund.

Don't miss this FUNdraiser!!!



For many people, the New Year brings about New Year's Resolutions to become more physically fit, to eat healthier, to start a new hobby, to spend more time with loved ones and/or to develop better spiritual practices.

Our Westminster library offers a variety of daily devotional books that will help you build your spiritual muscles:

A Time to be Renewed by Warren W. Wiersbe

A Year of Spirituality (a seasonal guide to new awareness) by Ingrid Collins

Day by Day by Charles Swindoll

Everyday Discipleship for Ordinary People by Stuart Briscoe

God's Little Devotional Book

Grace for the Moment by Max Lucado

Greater than Riches by John White

My Utmost for His Highest (updated) by Oswald Chambers

Quiet Times (devotional worship and bible study) by Max E. Anders

Rise and Shine by Liz Curtis Higgs

Strength for Today (Devotions for the Chronically Ill) by Sharon Broyles

The Green Bible Devotional by Carla Barnhill

The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren (40 day spiritual journey)

What the Psalmist Is Saying to You Today by Peter Wallace

Wisdom for the Way (For Busy People) by Charles R. Swindoll

If you need further assistance or have any questions,
please contact Susan at 905-493-3122.

Thank you, Westminster,
for your support of our Loblaw's Fundraiser.

In 2015 this on-going program raised \$3400



If you have not yet purchased these cards,
please consider doing so on a regular basis
and supporting this program in 2016!

**(Cards are redeemable at all stores in the
Loblaw Family...No Frills, Zehrs, etc)**

It is very easy... just buy your Loblaw's cards
in the gym after church
or at the office during the week.

For every \$100 of cards we sell, we receive \$5.00.
Cards of \$25, \$50 and \$100 can be purchased.

*We all buy groceries,
so why not support Westminster
at the same time?*

**THESE CARDS MAKE GREAT GIFTS TOO,
ESPECIALLY FOR STUDENTS LIVING AWAY FROM HOME!**

A Call for Submissions

This newsletter is yours!



It is made up of stories, articles and submissions by the people of Westminster United Church.
It is a place to share what is on your mind and let people know about upcoming events. It is a tool
of connection between members of this church so that we may continue to be the church in this world.

It is a collection of articles that bring together all of the many facets of this church in one place.

It is written by and for the people of this congregation, writer and non-writer alike, in order that
all in the world of Westminster might know what is happening in the Westminster world!

Anyone is welcome to submit something for this newsletter and we look forward to hearing all of your
stories, about the groups of this church and the exciting things that your lives bring.

The deadline for submissions to *The Westminster World* is the **21st of each month.**

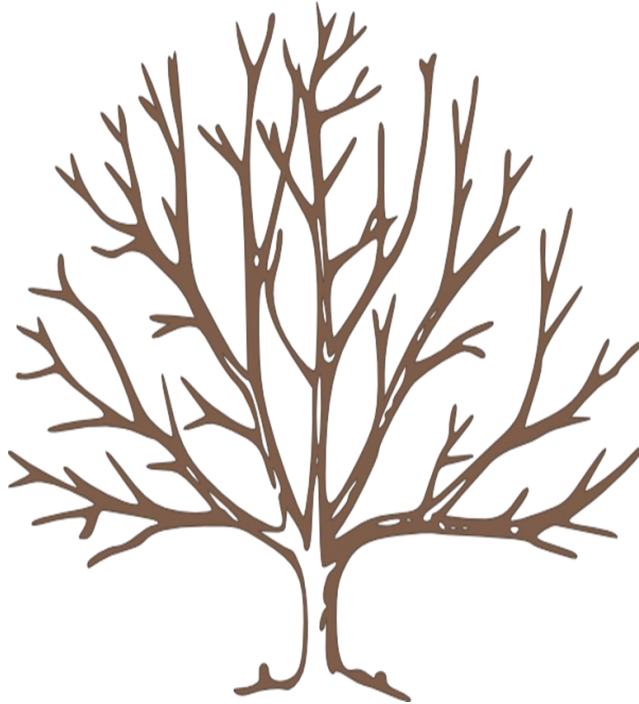
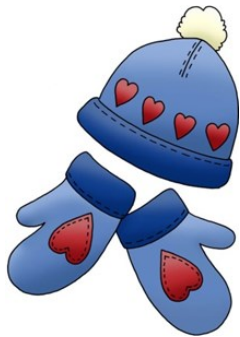
If you have an article, please send it to Bev Crumb at bcrumb@sympatico.ca.

As one year gives way to the next, so our Mitten Tree gives way to our Sock Tree!

Your kind donations of warm mitts and hats are being given to local schools.

In the month of January, please help us re-fill our tree with socks
so that no child will know the sting of the cold.

Many thanks!



Have you ever wondered if there might be
some little thing you can help with at church?

If so, please consider signing on to one of
the Volunteer Custodial Teams that very kindly
work together after church on Sunday to tidy
the building and get it ready for the week ahead.

Many hands make light work and a much shorter
time commitment!

If this sounds like a gift you could share
or might like to share, please speak with
Bob Neil from the Property Committee
or simply sign up on the clip board
outside of the church office.

Thank you for prayerfully considering how
and where you might be able to help.



With Appreciation!

Westminster United Church's Food Bank was the grateful recipient of two very successful food drives at Colonel Farewell School.

Under the guidance of Marissa Cowan, the Student Leadership Team conducted food drives at Hallowe'en and again at their Winter Concert.

With gratitude, Westminster accepted two mini-vans full of donations!





LAUGH OUT LOUD
(Questions that make you say, "hmmm?")

If you try to fail, and you fail, have you succeeded or failed?

How do "Do not walk on the grass" signs get there?

If I melt dry ice, can I take a bath without getting wet?

How can there be self-help "groups"?

How does the guy who drives the snow plow get to work in the morning?

What happens if you get scared half to death twice?

What was the best thing before sliced bread?

Do Roman paramedics refer to IV's as "4's"?

Why do croutons come in airtight packages? It's just stale bread.

If nothing sticks to Teflon, then how do they make it stick to the pan?

Why don't they make the entire airplane out of the same material
that the indestructible black box is made of?

If a turtle loses its shell, is it homeless or naked?

You're invited...

Women's Wellness with Romain <i>(Small Group, Registration Required)</i> 6:30pm-8:00pm	Friday, January 8 <i>(every week until January 29)</i>
Worship Service 10:30am J.a.M (Jesus and Me) Resumes <i>Classes held during the Service</i> Wellness Luncheon and Presentation <i>Guest Speaker: David Clarke, Durham Mental Health</i>	Sunday, January 10
Senior Fitness with Katie <i>(Small Group, Registration Required)</i> 10:30am-11:30am	Thursday, January 14 <i>(every week until March 3)</i>
Worship Service 10:30am LifeKeys with Cathy <i>(Small Group, Registration Required, every week until February 14)</i> 12:00pm-2:00pm	Sunday, January 17
Wine, Women and the Word <i>(Small Group, open to all women)</i> 7:00pm-9:00pm Founder's Room	Tuesday, January 19
Worship Service 10:30am	Sunday, January 24
Book Club <i>(Small Group, open to all)</i> 1:00pm-3:00pm <i>All Welcome</i>	Wednesday, January 27
Westminster's Got Talent 7:00pm <i>Stay tuned for ticket information</i>	Saturday, January 30
Worship Service 10:30am	Sunday, January 31
Worship Service 10:30am Support Westminster's Coldest Night of the Year Team <i>In the Gym, following the Service.</i>	Sunday, February 7
Shrove Tuesday...Pancake Supper! 5:30pm-7:00pm	Tuesday, February 9