

Where
flowers
bloom,
so does
hope.

- Lady Bird Johnson



Dear Westminster Friends,

It has been a month since we last worshiped together in person.
Has it only been one month?

Online services, virtual coffee hour, ZOOM committee meetings, Westminster Youtube channel. Before the pandemic any one of these initiatives might have involved weeks of discussion before they went live, but look at what has happened in only a month!

Life has taken on a different rhythm for all of us. We can be proud of how our church community has embraced change and adapted. The building is closed but we continue to be the church. Thank you to all the volunteers who are keeping the food bank running, who are connecting as committees, delivering Easter flowers, praying for one another, looking after the church property, offering ways to stay connected whether through our Sunday coffee hour, online hymn sing and zumba, or the call tree. People have volunteered to get groceries for those in need and have been willing to help in numerous ways. Thank you!

We are all learning how to do things in new ways. Producing online worship videos is definitely a new experience for me. People have been asking about how these services are being put together. Well, it's just me, my iPhone and computer. I set my iPhone on a tripod in the sanctuary and use a lapel mic that runs to the phone. The computer is on a music stand with sermon notes on powerpoint and I use my watch as a remote to change the slides. I take photos of the sanctuary space and around the church with the same iPhone, or capture photos and videos from my neighbourhood when I am out on walks.

Margaret Motum records the music separately and emails the files so I can add them to the service video. Readers and other worship participants have done the same. When the video is recorded, I am the only one in the sanctuary. Afterwards, I put the service elements together (video, music, transitions) using software on my home computer. Over the last month, our worship services have had approximately 2600 views.

I've been thinking a lot about Mark's account of the Easter story that we read on Easter Sunday. We're told that the women fled the tomb and didn't say anything about Jesus being raised "for they were afraid." But if they didn't share the good news...if they didn't share news of the risen Christ, then who will? How might you and I tell others about experiencing the risen Christ? Where have we caught glimpses of resurrection hope? The signs are all around us in the ways people are caring for one another, reaching out, trying new things in new ways. Amidst the daily news bringing reasons for concern, there are also signs of God's presence bringing reasons to rejoice. During this Easter season may you catch glimpses of new life and hope as God comes to us over and over again. We are in this together, we are loved, we are not alone.

Westminster friends, know that you are being held in heart and prayer.

God bless you and keep you today and always.

Rev. Michelle



Council Update

At our Council meeting (via Zoom Conferencing) on March 24th, we discussed how best to continue the work of Westminster United Church in these difficult times of social distancing.

Communicating is a priority, of course. Thanks to our Council chair, Paul Pierson, emails are being sent with updates and easy links to Rev. Michelle's Sunday worship, and a Phone Tree has been established. Here are some of the other initiatives we are undertaking to continue to serve our church family.



Property:

During the week, our custodian works in the building and is inspecting the exterior daily; on the weekend, teams are checking on the security of the property; meetings are continuing via Zoom.

M&P:

Meeting via Zoom to support our staff; feeling deep gratitude for the energy and commitment to ministry in our church community

Christian Education:

Hosting J.a.M Sessions (Sunday School program) every Sunday morning at 11:00am, via Zoom. Youth Group continues via Zoom in its regular Thursday time slot of 7:00pm.

With heavy hearts, cancelled our annual Easter EGGstravaganza.

Will be meeting via video conferencing to discuss important upcoming events, such as Rendez-Vous (a National United Church gathering for Youth) and this year's Vacation Bible School. Stay tuned as more details become available.

UCW:

Executive is meeting via telephone conference; have cancelled all upcoming events including the Yard Sale, the Mother's Day Tea and several catering events

Communications:

Continuing publication of the newsletter; emailing; meeting regularly via zoom; updating the messages on our electronic sign

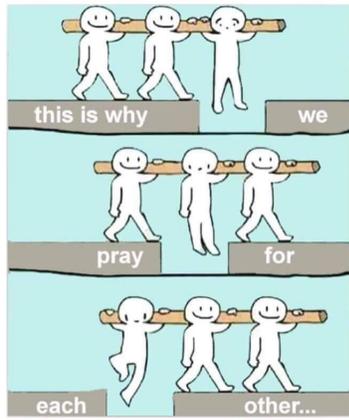
All of our Committees and their volunteers are hard at work so that the Westminster Community can continue to move forward. Working together is what we do best!



Diversity Embraced Here



Love this:



Our Prayer Team is still fully active during this time of separation.

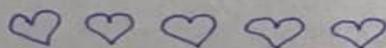
Just as you would place your prayers of concern and gratitude in the Prayer Basket during Sunday morning worship, you are invited to put your prayers into our Electronic Prayer Basket and our Prayer Team and Ministry Team will gladly add you to our Prayer List.

Please email or call Cathy Shaw with any Prayer Requests you might have...westminster.cathy@gmail.com or 905-449-3325.

May you feel God's love and know God's grace as you experience the beauty of God's world each day.

DAILY QUARANTINE QUESTIONS

1. Who am I checking on or connecting with today?
2. What expectations of "normal" am I letting go of today?
3. How am I getting outside today?
4. How am I moving my body today?
5. How am I expressing my creativity today?
6. What type of self-care am I practicing today?
7. What am I grateful for today?



Stacy J. 3/20/20



*People within our congregation have made
 donations towards these flowers
 in memory of loved ones acknowledged on this list.
 The flowers have been delivered as a ministry
 to people within our congregation
 as a symbol of our love and support.*

<i>Donated by:</i>	<i>In memory of:</i>
Shane & Margaret Suepaul	Kennick Suepaul Harold Suepaul Jacquelin Suepaul Ronald Roopsingh
The Webster Family	Candide & James Webster Shirley Page Olivia & Jim Shurrie
Lynn Majoros	Lou Majoros
Jacqueline Boers	Dan McKay
Angela Odei	Dr. Larbi Odei Zoe Samantha Odei
Lori Rosdobutko	Jessie Rosdobutko
Alan & Nancy Wallis	Mark Wallis
Claire Stacey	Grandma Stacey & Grandpa Downing
Crystal & Arthur Smith	Douglas Smith Morley Stevenson

Easter Flowers Continued

Susan Webb	Aunt Dorothy
Joanne Gibb	Norman Gibb Roy & Kay Chute Jim Mamie Gibb
Janice Bortoluss	Alan & Evelyn Martin
John & Christena Darroch	Donald & Sarah Vance
Gail Brimbecomb	Our many relatives and friends who have passed on
Heather & Ken Montague	Our mothers, fathers, sisters & brothers
Bev Crumb	Dorothie & Jack Crumb Elizabeth Crumb Frances & Preston Pollard Alice & Alfred Crumb
Betty Cashmore	My sister Edith
June & Ron Martin	Roma & Jim Martin Beatrice & Kenneth McKee
Maureen Dingman	Grace & Ken Jull Marion & Orville Dingman
Elizabeth Hatter	Ray (Husband)
Milly Harding	Morgan Family
Sandra Harding	Bornemann, Cooley, Harding & Marks Family
Bruce Cullen	Ken & Bessie Cullen
Edward Phillips	
Ava & James Tomlinson Jean Watson	Geoffrey Watson (Father and Husband) Stan Tomlinson (Father and Father-in-law)
John & Helen Bowman	Phin & Lela Pressey Bernice & Richard Bowman
Joan Sanderson	Harry Sanderson
The Cherwinka Family	Robert (Bob) Rezek (Cathy's Dad)
Jill & Tom Medlock	Shirley Coup Medlock Family
Jim & Gail Wild	Our parents Aunt Majorie Kevin Wild Josiah Brewster-Wild
The Laycock Family	Doug & Doreen Laycock Roger Howes
Wendy, Jim Edwards & Family	Grandma Granny Nanny
Mike, Cheryl & Joseph	Shirley Amirault Sharon Nicholson

Continued on Next Page

Easter Flowers Continued

Fitz & Maisie Morrison	Clarence & Catherin McKenzie Justin & Louise Morrison
Gordon Kirk	Aline Kirk
Sue & Bob Neil	Romual & Marie Lesage (Sue Neil's parents) Palmer & Eleanor Neil (Bob Neil's parents)
Joanne & Clarence MacPherson	Elva and Ken McCalden Roy MacPherson
Dawn & Ed Craig	Our Families
Barbara Auchterlonie	Jim (Husband) Jake (Grandson)
Amy Ponech	Tom Monte Loralee
Bob Locksley	Glenda Locksley
Michelle Alston, Jordyn & Warren Lesser	Douglas & Margaret McLaurin (Michelle's Mom and Dad) Dorothy Tate (Grandma) Roberta Lesser (Warren's Mom) Emma Lesser (Grandma) Scott Daly (Warren's friend)
Derek & Marilyn Dunford	Rena Dunford (Sister) Doris Dunford (Mother) Bill Herlihey (Brother in law)
John de Bruijn	Frances H Barton
Donna Wanamaker	Neil Wanamaker (Husband)
Dianne Noftle	Mark Noftle (Son) Stan & Eileen Noftle Grandparents) Nathan Roberts Others gone too soon
Corinne Smith	Marie & Allen Leavitt (Parents) Elaine Dwyer (Sister)
Michelle & Jake Robinson & Family	Opal, Aubrey & Ruby Robinson





Is now ONLINE!

Join Cathy Shaw, our Minister of Faith Formation,
every Sunday morning at 11:00am
for a J.a.M Session!

We are using Zoom for J.a.M at this time.
You can connect by following the link
sent out in the weekly Wednesday email to J.a.M families.

If you would like to receive this email, please contact Cathy at:
westminster.cathy@gmail.com



We hold in our hearts and prayers the
following families, as they grieve the recent
loss of their loved ones...

Cheryl, Martin, Liam and Olive Gilroy,
on the loss of Cheryl's beloved brother,
Jonathan Foster and her cherished
Uncle, Bryant Pushie

Larry and Teena Morrow,
on the passing of Larry's dear father,
Lloyd Morrow.

This Note of Thanks
goes out to

Heather VonZuben
and
Katie Bonikowsky

for their willingness to
offer programming that keeps us
engaged, active and connected.

Many thanks to Heather
for leading an online
Hymn Sing
and to Katie for her
online leadership in
Zumba



Wellness Committee

The Wellness Committee continues to meet monthly via Zoom Conferencing to plan several initiatives. The Committee has enlisted the help of Friendly Visitors and other volunteers to deliver ninety flower arrangements on Easter Sunday to people who could use emotional support at this time. As well, the committee is working with church leadership to organize emotional, spiritual and social support for congregants during this COVID-19 pandemic. This includes a Call Tree whereby volunteers will regularly connect with members of the congregation to check in and offer prayers and encouragement. Also, we have set up a Sunday Check-in and Chat' session via live streaming and video conferencing software. The committee is also looking at arranging a health awareness event via live streaming for later in the Spring.

From The Blood Donor Clinic

Canadian Blood Services took in 57 units of blood from 61 people who attended the St. Patrick's Day Clinic the night before the church was closed due to the COVID-19 virus. Many thanks to our helpers: Arlene and Joanne and to our volunteer Coordinator, Elizabeth Hatter.

We have a wonderful team when a clinic takes place. Big thanks to the folks who gave... you are very precious and we cannot do this without you!



Outreach Committee

Food Bank



Our community Food Bank remains open every Tuesday, from 10:00am-12:00pm.

Donations to the Food Bank can be dropped off at the church on Mondays between 10:00am and 12:00pm

Needed items include: jam, peanut butter, canned meat and fruit. cereal, Kraft dinner, chunky soup, crackers, canned potatoes.

With thanks for your support! We will continue for as long as possible - watch Westminster emails for any future developments.

St. Vincent's Kitchen

Until further notice, this daily hot-meal kitchen (feeding 125-200 every day) is closed. Westminster's volunteer duties (first Wednesday of the month) will resume at re-opening.



Introducing...

Maxwell (Max) Sheldon Macgregor Suepaul, born March 3, 2020, at 7 lbs.10 ozs!!

His parents, Emily Macgregor and Sheldon Suepaul, say he's probably the most contented baby ever.

While we can't hold him, so far Grampa Shane and Gramma Margaret "see" him nightly via WhatsApp and we get regular face time. He is absolutely gorgeous!

Welcome to the World, Patrick Christopher Alexander-Webber

This little guy was born the morning of April 3rd weighing 6 lb 9 oz.

Mommy Laura and Daddy James are doing fine and Grandma Joanne Gibb is absolutely thrilled!

During this difficult time our world is experiencing, the arrival of new life and happy news seems even more of a blessing.



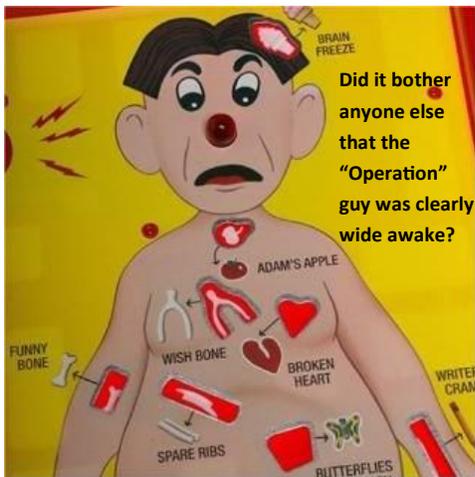
LET'S LAUGH...

Your Weekly Horoscope
©AudreyLovesParis

 ARIES You'll be spending time in your home.	 LIBRA You'll be spending time in your home.
 TAURUS You'll be spending time in your home.	 SCORPIO You'll be spending time in your home.
 GEMINI You'll be spending time in your home.	 SAGITTARIUS You'll be spending time in your home.
 CANCER You'll be spending time in your home.	 CAPRICORN You'll be spending time in your home.
 LEO You'll be spending time in your home.	 AQUARIUS You'll be spending time in your home.
 VIRGO You'll be spending time in your home.	 PISCES You'll be spending time in your home.

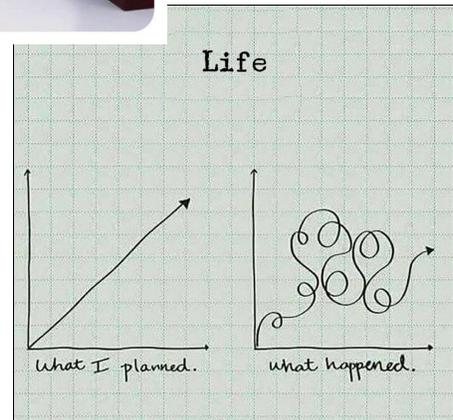


Don't forget to wash your hands



To do list-

- 1- Go to pet store.
- 2- Buy bird seeds.
- 3- Ask how long it will take for the bird to grow.
- 4- wait for the reaction.

God is Watching...

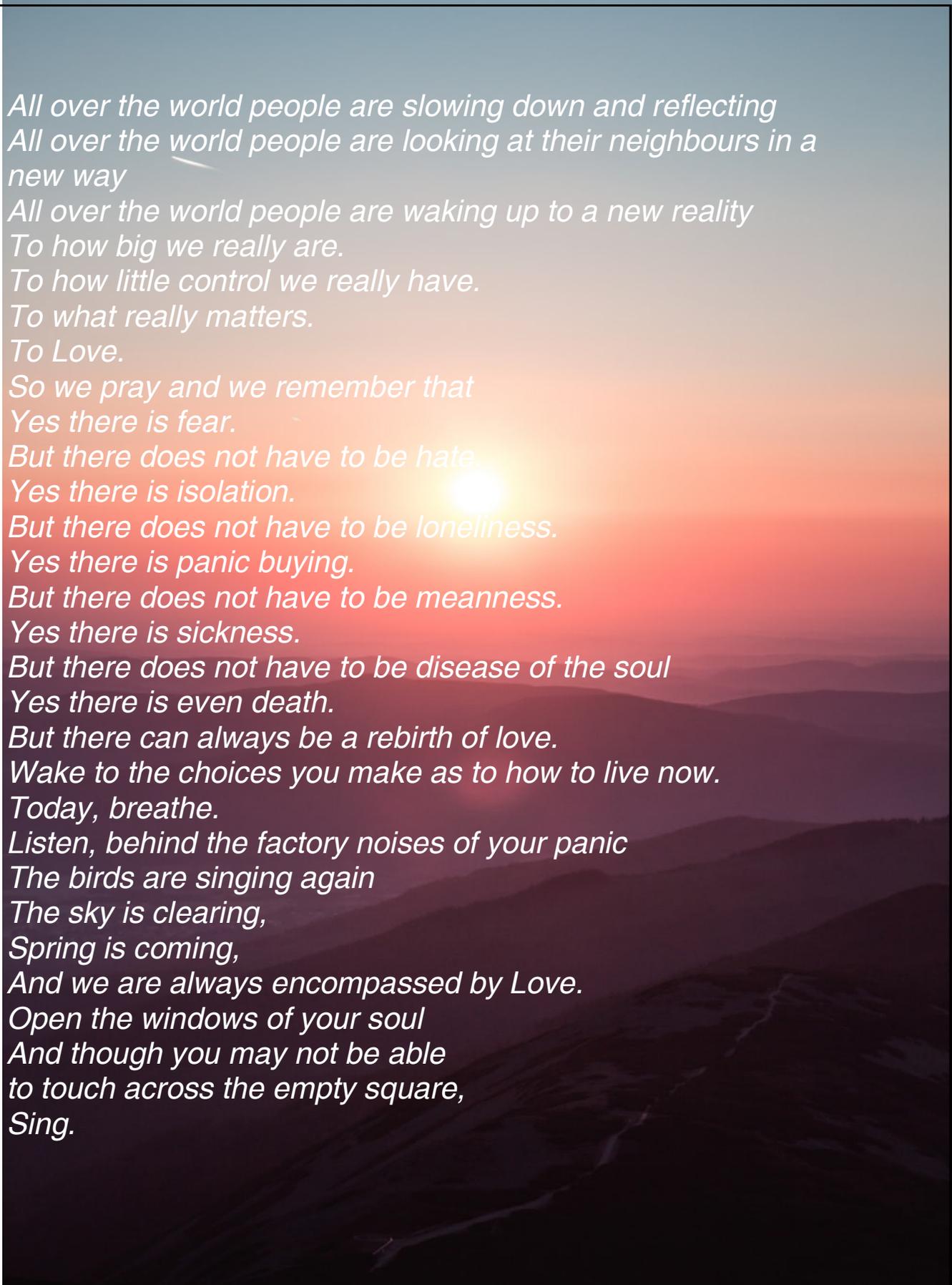
The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Church elementary school for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note, and put it on the apple tray... 'Take only ONE. God is watching.' Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies. A child had written a note, 'Take all you want. God is watching the apples.'

On March 13, 2020, Brother Richard Hendrick,
a Capuchin Franciscan living in Ireland,
penned this touching poem about coronavirus.

Lockdown

*Yes there is fear.
Yes there is isolation.
Yes there is panic buying.
Yes there is sickness.
Yes there is even death.
But,
They say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise
You can hear the birds again.
They say that after just a few weeks of quiet
The sky is no longer thick with fumes
But blue and grey and clear.
They say that in the streets of Assisi
People are singing to each other
across the empty squares,
keeping their windows open
so that those who are alone
may hear the sounds of family around them.
They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland
Is offering free meals and delivery to the housebound.
Today a young woman I know
is busy spreading fliers with her number
through the neighbourhood
So that the elders may have someone to call on.
Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples
are preparing to welcome
and shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary*

(continued on next page)



*All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting
All over the world people are looking at their neighbours in a
new way
All over the world people are waking up to a new reality
To how big we really are.
To how little control we really have.
To what really matters.
To Love.
So we pray and we remember that
Yes there is fear.
But there does not have to be hate.
Yes there is isolation.
But there does not have to be loneliness.
Yes there is panic buying.
But there does not have to be meanness.
Yes there is sickness.
But there does not have to be disease of the soul
Yes there is even death.
But there can always be a rebirth of love.
Wake to the choices you make as to how to live now.
Today, breathe.
Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic
The birds are singing again
The sky is clearing,
Spring is coming,
And we are always encompassed by Love.
Open the windows of your soul
And though you may not be able
to touch across the empty square,
Sing.*

Stewardship/Finance Committee

Having met on March 11, 2020, before "social distancing", topics reviewed included:

Our Finances, led by our Treasurer, Monica. She will continue to provide us with online up-to-date figures monthly or as required; Our Bazaar Planning Meeting still scheduled for Apr. 15th (now, via Conferencing or Zoom); Looking at inviting BroadsWay again for Spring 2021; and Beginning preparations for our Stewardship Campaign earlier, in June, rather than in September.

On March 25th & March 26th, Monica V., Paul P., and I participated in the United In Learning Webinar, "Congregational Finances During the Pandemic" and my takeaway is how quickly the Leadership of the United Church was able to put this together to begin the process of answering questions about the Church's finances and to confirm that UCC is here to support the churches and our Ministers and Staff.

Their assurance of "All Hands On Deck" included the logistics for emergency funding and holding off or pushing forward certain payments and the different ways that congregations can continue to make their tithing and givings to support the work that is STILL going on at WUC and other churches.

May we all continue to support and care for each other through these uncertain times.

Margaret Suepaul
Chair, Stewardship/Finance

WORSHIP COMMITTEE:

When we're back in the pews, you may see a couple of baskets in the Narthex before the 10:30 a.m. service on Sundays. These baskets will contain two in-process scarves, along with a note. The note says:

"If you listen better when you are doing something with your hands, we invite you to take a scarf from the basket and knit a few rows during the worship service. As you knit, we encourage you to pray for the person who will receive the scarf. After worship, return the scarf to the basket. The Worship Committee will distribute the completed scarves. For some, having busy hands helps to focus or calm the mind and spirit."

=====



A Painting to Bring Hope

Artist: Jeanne Yee



(well, sort of...)

Did you know ...

...We are glad to welcome home our friends who have returned safely from their studies abroad, trips and cruises.

...Congratulations to Don Fry and our Parish Mosaic. On March 7th, at the AIDS Durham 2020 Gala, Don was recognized for his support of the LGBTQ community. Also recognized were Brooklin United and the DDSB.

...The Suepauls are Grandparents! On March 3rd, Sheldon and his wife, Emily welcomed a 7lb 10oz baby boy, Maxwell MacGregor Suepaul, to the family.

...Joanne Gibb is once again a proud Grandma. This time to a healthy baby boy, born on April 3rd and weighing in at 6 lb 9 oz. Welcome to Patrick Christopher Alexander-Webber.

...And speaking of grandbabies, Lori and Ed Rosdobutko will become grandparents in September. Their son, Eric, and his wife, Jamie, are expecting!

...Kudos to our staff and Council members who have learned and implemented the new technologies we are now using. Thanks to their efforts, we are receiving wonderful sermons from Rev. Michelle, moving music from Margaret Motum, regular updates from our Council Chair, Paul Pierson and Cathy Shaw has J.a.M and our Youth Group up and running for our children. In addition, we are able to conduct meetings and even socialize at 'coffee time' on Sunday afternoon. Bravo, Westminster United Church.

***** During this time of social distancing, it is important for us to stay connected to our church family. Please share your good news stories! Send your article, with a photo if you have one, to The Westminster World editor at bcrumb@sympatico.ca**



Our Youth Group, like all others, have adapted to our world of Social Distancing.

This awesome group continues to gather online at their regular meeting time on Thursday evenings.

Should you wish to inquire about our Youth Group, please contact their leader, Cathy Shaw at westminster.cathy@gmail.com

Buds & Shrubs

Buds & Shrubs is a working subcommittee of our Property Committee that has embarked on a 3-Year Mission to Beautify our Church Grounds. To welcome our Canadian Spring, Buds & Shrubs is currently in our planning for this year's Phase 1.

Part of this year's tasks is the refurbishment of plant and flower beds on the north, east and south sides of our church building.

Most of these areas were prepared in the fall with a general weeding and clean-up of existing beds, along with the removal of overgrown and dead shrubs. In existing beds, cloth and landscape bark were put down to prevent weeds and conserve ground moisture for current plantings, with the front 40 cm (16 in) of bed uncovered by cloth to allow the planting of annual flowers.

Some of the existing shrubs and plants in these beds were also replaced by Rose of Sharon, and perennials such as Mallow and Geranium (North Side only). All of the shrubs along the east and south walls of the sanctuary were removed and a new planting bed created via shovel and rototiller.

Believe it or not, our crew of 6 to 8 volunteers did all this in just a couple of days. Thank you everyone who helped out. (Lots of sunshine, fresh air and cool drinks also were of help)

Moving forward this spring, we will require ground-hugging and medium growth conifer and deciduous (flowering) shrubs planted against the building. This will be followed by foliage/flowering perennials that fit the environment (warm/chilly, sunny/shady, wet/dry). Then the front of each bed will have a place to plant annuals to complement the seasons (spring, summer and fall).

Some of the planting themes we are currently working with are: a children's flower and vegetable garden, a butterfly garden, and a pathway rock garden. We are also considering planting a community vegetable garden along 50 meters (150 ft) of fence at the north side of our parking lot.

Along with a small budget available from the Property Committee this year, *Buds & Shrubs plans to procure plants and shrubs in a variety of ways. From a list of shrubs and perennial/annual plants we will request our congregation to provide plants from their gardens, donations from garden centres as well as donations to help us buy plants. Buds & Shrubs is also planning a Phase2 fall fund-raising activity, encouraging donations for next year's planting season in cash and/or in plants from your garden.*

We encourage and welcome congregation members to sign up and participate in the planning, procurement and planting of our gardens this year. Please contact Ron at randskurtz@rogers.com, if you are interested in helping with this project.

Thank you!
Happy Gardening, Everyone!

Ron Kurtz
Chair, Buds & Shrubs

Pray, Praise, Ponder

God

Made me.

Heals me.

Blesses me.

Defends me.

Forgives me.

Loves me.

Property Committee

(article by Ron Kurtz)

Did you know that our HVAC systems are now nearing 18 years of operation, which will be 3 years past their expected life cycle? Our units were installed in 2002.

Also, did you know that we have 10 units working to heat and cool 7 zones in the church? Three HVAC units service the sanctuary and 6 of the units are located on the flat roof, exposed to the elements.

Our HVAC units have operated well over the years with little maintenance until now, however, furnaces, compressors and condensers have a life span and when they need to be repaired or replaced, can cost thousands of dollars, that may be instead put toward new HVAC units.

Recently we have seen more costly repairs on three of our HVAC units.

Unit #9, that cools the west and north classrooms (Montessori School space), needs a new compressor and system rebalance.

Unit #8, that serves the choir and electrical rooms, has an inoperable cooling system, and needs the AC to be removed safely along with its refrigerant and a rebalance of the heating system.

Unit #1, that serves the gym, with its higher performance loads and longer run times is yearly increasing in cost to repair and maintain.

As other units fail, we will see more costly repairs to the overall system in the near future.

The Property Committee is now in a planning stage to replace our HVAC system with new energy efficient units. Along with the increased cost of repair issues noted above, other reasons for replacement are:

- The older refrigerant piping used in our current HVAC is more prone to leak. If refrigerant escapes it is more toxic to the environment than the newer refrigerants now in use.
- The refrigerant in our current HVAC system is now obsolete and not being manufactured. We anticipate this limited supply will run out in the next several years. If this happens, our HVAC units will need to have their compressors, piping and controls replaced to enable them to operate with the AC refrigerants now available today. And, with the decade rise in electricity and gas rates, our current HVAC system will be less efficient than the newer units available today. *New HVAC units with air inlet energy recovery, air economizers, higher efficiency AC compressors and furnaces, will heat and cool our spaces more efficiently. This will lower energy costs and our carbon foot print, providing cost savings and payback to afford replacement with new HVAC units..*

We are continuing to review alternatives to reduce energy as we continue our replacement planning and understanding of increases in maintenance. The Property Committee will have a proposal in the fall to replace/repair all ten HVAC units in the next several years.

What are your thoughts on replacing the HVAC system? Please feel free to comment, providing us information that we can follow-up and assess. Thank you.

Your WUC Property Committee

You're invited...

**...to
stay home
and
stay safe!**

**We'll be thrilled to see you
again when we get the all clear!**



Until then...Many Blessings!