

Christian Family Sunday

(Sunday, May 10th)



Celebrating relationships that enrich
and challenge us to live our faith.

Dear Westminster Friends:

I was reading the book of Hebrews in the New Testament the other night. It is a letter of encouragement to a group of people who were being persecuted for their beliefs; men and women who were overwhelmed, running out of endurance, facing an uncertain future. They were worried and tired. The letter comes to them holding out the necessity of faith in such a time.

"Faith is the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen."

Hebrews 11:1

The letter recounts stories of people who lived by faith beginning with Abraham and Sarah. "By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place...; and he set out, not knowing where he was going." (Hebrews 11:8) It is one of the best lines of scripture for the simple truth it conveys, "And he set out, not knowing where he was going."

And so it is.

For all our planning, budgeting, organizing and predicting, the truth is we don't always know where we are going, or what the future holds or what the journey will look like. Certainly, this pandemic has thrown us all into unknown territory.

Abraham didn't know. God once called to him during an anxious night and invited him to look at the belly of the sky, showing him the stars, assuring him of a future he could not see. It was a sign that Abraham held onto. Abraham and Sarah, like those in the generations that followed, would find themselves feeling uncertain and low on endurance at times, but they would never find themselves alone. God's grace and God's promises were theirs to keep and with that in their pockets they journeyed into the future with faith and hope.

This seemed to resonate this past week as we've heard of restrictions being eased and some businesses being able to open. For churches, we still don't know when we'll be able to meet in-person again or what that will look like as it gets phased in. There is a lot that we do not know. And yet, as people of faith we still trust in God, in Love's presence, in the Spirit's power, and that as much as anything sustains us during a time of being apart and a time of not knowing.

We look forward to the days ahead, to the time when we will worship again in person. In the meantime, I am grateful for the people and the technology enabling us to connect, and for the Spirit that brings us together regardless of distance.

May God continue to be with us as we journey and as we keep the faith.

Much love,

Rev. Michelle





Carly Marie

This Mother's Day

let us recognize ALL mothers.

The ones who nurture their children here on Earth.
The ones who carry some if not all of their children in their hearts
and the ones who yearn just to conceive a child.

www.CarlyMarieProjectHeal.com

Spreading Joy!

Our Administrator Becky shares this Good News Story with us...

A week or so ago, a family at our church (*Salvation Army, Oshawa*) secretly decorated the front lawn of a friend of theirs from the church. That family then passed it on the next day.

When we woke up one day, our lawn was decorated and we had a card taped to our mailbox telling us who it was from and to pass on the fun to another family in the church.

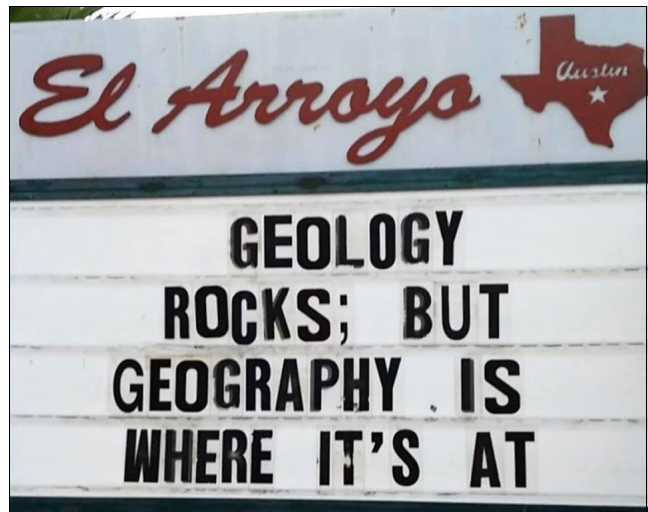
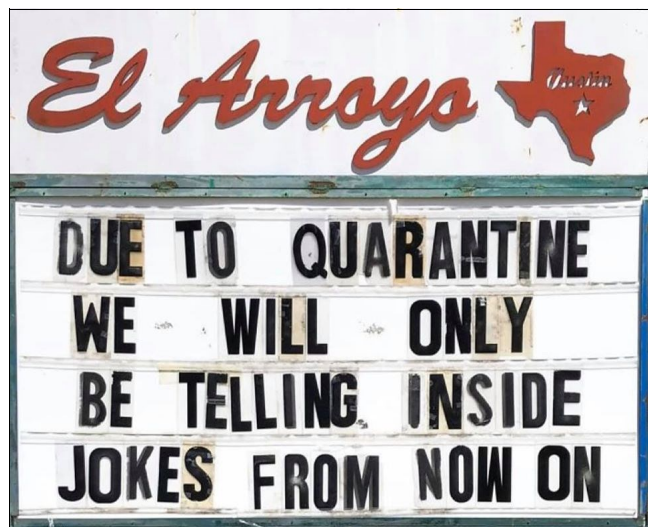
These photos show how happy this made our family, just look at that smile on Charlotte's face (*and if you could see Dasher's face, he's smiling too*).

How wonderful to be able to both receive and give such joy and happiness!



*If you have the power to make someone happy, do it!
The world needs more of that!*

LET'S LAUGH...



MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

A huge Westminster thank you is being sent to our Food Bank Friend, Liam. This young man belongs to the 11th Whitby Beaver Colony and wanted to help raise awareness and support our food bank.

Liam chose to collect and donate food items as part of his Northern Lights Quest, the highest award you can earn as a third year Beaver. He began his quest before the pandemic began, and continued to collect, determined to help in any way he could to make the community better in some way.

The Westminster Food Bank was recently the grateful recipient of Liam's hard work, kindness and compassion. Thank you Liam, for reminding us that one person *can* make a difference! compassion



I teach
Sunday School
what's your
superpower?

**Our J.a.M Sunday School will need your help
when we return to our regular programming!**

We would love for you to join our J.a.M Team!

There are no age, gender or experience limits, you choose how often you teach and we support and guide you every step of the way. The curriculum is easy to teach and provided for you.

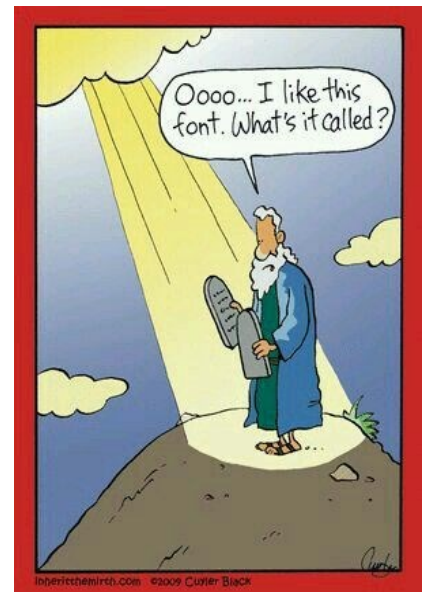
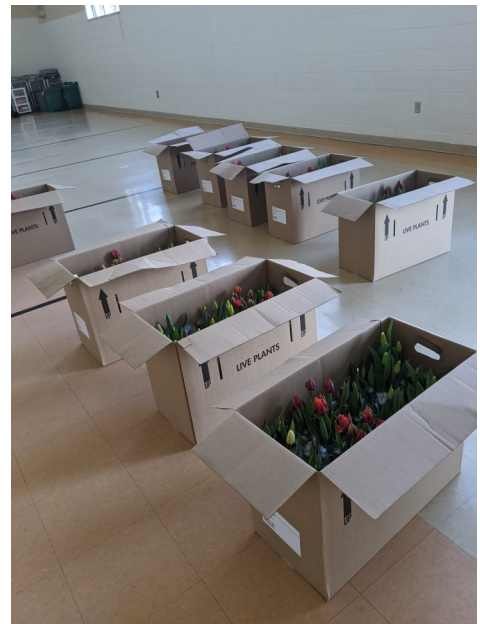
If you would like more information on how you can help transform young lives and share in the life of Westminster, please contact Cathy Shaw at cshaw@westminster-uc.ca

Easter Flowers

On Saturday April 11th, 90 pots of tulips were delivered to friends of Westminster who needed a little extra love during this difficult time. The Wellness Committee would like to thank the 16 individuals or teams that made this possible, along with Catherine Howard, Maureen Dingman, Teena Morrow and Rev. Michelle who all helped with the organization of this project, and Rebecca Clingman for administrative support. We would also like to acknowledge the many families who donated the funds in memory of their loved ones. Without their support, this project would not have happened. Memorial listings were on the Westminster website and in the April *Westminster World* newsletter. Reports back from the delivery teams indicated that the recipients were extremely pleased to be remembered and thought of. Thanks, everyone, for sharing God's love while maintaining Social Distancing.

Submitted by
Crystal Smith

Wellness
Committee member.



A PAT ON THE BACK

During this very difficult time, when so many of our routines have had to be changed or abandoned altogether, it is important to express our appreciation for what is being done for our Westminster Family.

Reverend Michelle has had to learn a lot of technology in a very short time and because of her efforts, we continue to learn and grow and receive comfort from her sermons. She enters our now empty church building to set up her stands, camera and microphone, and delivers her message to an empty sanctuary. She then goes home to edit, add in images and the recorded music sent to her by Margaret Motum, our Minister of Music, and turn it into the polished presentation we see on YouTube.

Margaret Motum has also learned a few new tricks. After experimenting with many different apps, she found one which clearly records her pieces for Reverend Michelle's services. She, too, has ventured into the empty sanctuary to record the joyful organ music we heard on Easter Sunday.

Cathy Shaw, our Minister of Faith Formation, has also developed a new bag of tech tricks. In order to continue reaching the children in our Westminster family, she purchased a Zoom account and now has the Youth Group up and running every Thursday night, and J.a.M. every Sunday morning. After a Zoom meeting with the CE Committee, there is now a rumour circulating that there will be a new and interesting Picnic Sunday this year.

Paul Pierson, the very dedicated Chair of Council, was our first Zoom account holder. It is through him that we have connected to Reverend Michelle's services and to our three weekly singalongs, so joyfully and enthusiastically run by Heather VonZuben. With Clarence MacPherson's help, we have been able to share Coffee Hour through Crowdcast and now Zoom every Sunday afternoon.

A Telephone Tree was set up several weeks ago, and members of the congregation are checking in with our Westminster family to ensure that we all stay connected.

Though separated physically, we are still connected in so many important ways.

We thank and bless all who are holding our Westminster Family so close.

Pray Praise Ponder

“Once a man was asked, ‘what did you gain by regularly praying to God?’ The man replied, ‘nothing... but let me tell you what I lost: Anger, ego, greed, depression, insecurity, and fear of death.’ Sometimes, the answer to our prayers is not gaining but losing; which ultimately is the gain.”



**This United Church's National Gathering of
Youth, Young Adults and Youth Leaders
is still on — just in a different way.**

2020 is turning out to be a year of the unexpected
and that means Rendez-vous 2020
will be a Rendez-vous unlike any other.

Due to the ongoing health crisis, we won't be able to hold
a large gathering in Calgary this summer.

It's up to us to dream together what it means to be a community of faith,
even if we can't all be in the same (physical) space.

Through real-time online events, recordings, and DIY workshop kits, we will celebrate

**BOLD FAITH
BRAVE SPACE
BRAZEN GRACE**

Here's what you can expect:

- Inspiring speakers, powerful worship and singing your favorite songs
 - Fun, engaging and interactive workshops and activities
 - New friends from across the country and around the world

Stay tuned for more information, as it becomes available!
Rendez-vous is for Youth in Grade 9 and up!

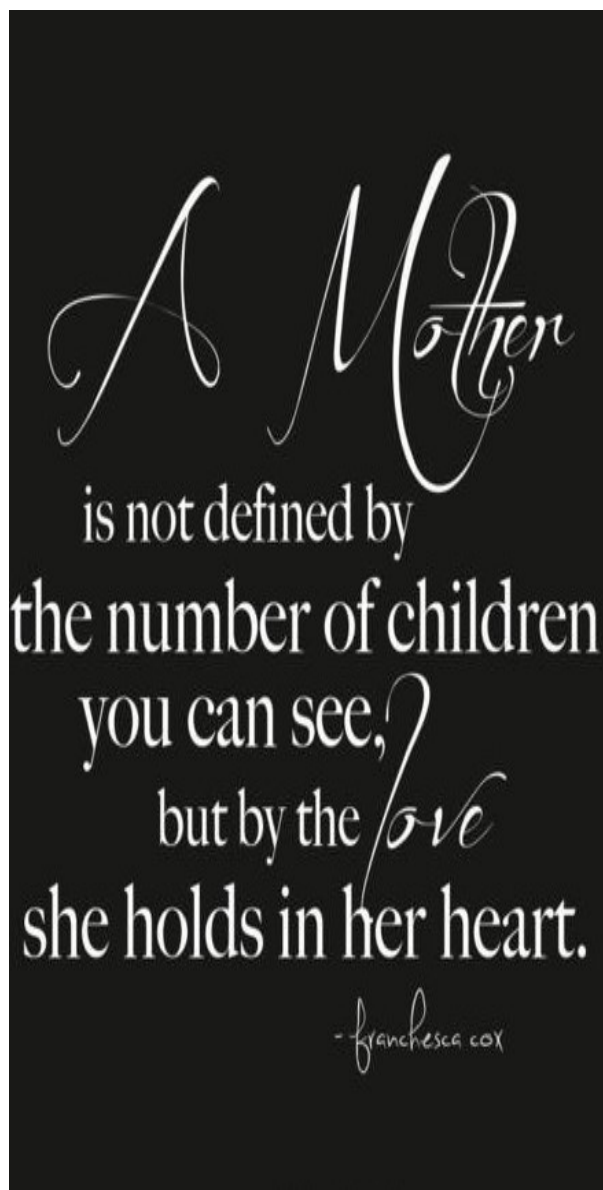


Is now ONLINE!

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



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.*



(well, sort of...)

Did you know ...

...that our continued isolation has caused some strange behaviours among our Westminster folk...?

- ◆ Joanne G. has become a Peeping Tomasina. Yes, she has been seen lurking outside a home on Bathurst Street in Toronto. She **says** she's trying to get a look at her new grandson!
- ◆ Our very own office administrator (Becky) has been defacing neighbours' property – with whirlygigs and flamingos.
- ◆ Reverend Michelle has been wandering outside the church, head down, snapping photos of the ground.

...that Marissa F. has dedicated a considerable part of her daily schedule to making hundreds and hundreds of much-needed masks for frontline workers (*see photos below*).

...that Joanna C. has put aside her knitting needles and switched her talents to making masks and gowns.

...that Ava T. very sensibly is honing her baking and quilting skills (*see photos below*).

...that Teena M. has started a recipe exchange of 'go-to' favourites for cooks needing inspiration while confined at home. Will the recipes become a cookbook, we wonder?

...that the Pierson family recently celebrated Brock's graduation from Brock University with a take-out dinner from The Brock House. (Seriously??)
Congratulations, Brock!

...that Jan Douglas H. has been accepted to the Architecture program at the University of Waterloo. Congratulations Jan!

If you have a newsworthy item to share, please send it (and an accompanying photo, if you have one) to bcrumb@sympatico.ca and we will publish it in next month's *Westminster World*.



Manning Mews Non-Profit Homes Corporation - Director Position

**Looking for a worthy and interesting opportunity to assist seniors
and give back to the community?**

Look no further, Manning Mews Non-Profit Homes Corporation (Manning Mews) has that opportunity for you.

Manning Mews is a non-profit organization that provides low-cost housing for seniors on property on Manning Road, east of Scott Street. The management and operations of Manning Mews is the responsibility of the Directors of Manning Mews Non-Profit Housing. There are some vacancies in the Directors position on the Board.

Here is some information about this opportunity:

Skills or knowledge

- ◆ Ability to work with others in a team environment
- ◆ An interest in governance of non-profit housing corporations is an asset

Time Commitment

- ◆ Attendance in Board meetings in September, October, November, January, February, March, April, May and June. Meetings are approximately 2 hours per meeting. Occasionally there may be a special meeting throughout the year, as required.
- ◆ Attendance at Westminster United Church Annual Meeting (approximately 2 hours)
- ◆ Optional site visits are organized whereby two directors are required to attend and gather specific information. Optional training is available.

Compensation

- ◆ All Director's costs are paid by the corporation
- ◆ Immense personal gratification for assisting seniors in our community.

If you are interested in becoming a Director or would like more information, please contact Arthur Smith, President, at prof.ajsmith@gmail.com



Diversity Embraced Here

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."

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An Update from the Outreach Committee

Foodbank News

As you know, our foodbank is still 'up and running' every Tuesday morning, as it is an Essential Service. Our congregation has been generously donating both food items and money to keep it well stocked during these difficult times.

Many thanks to HomeSense in Oshawa for their recent donation, and thanks to Suzanne R. for dropping it off.

There is a need for re-usable bags. If you have bags and/or donations of food or money, they can be dropped off at the church on Monday mornings between 10:00 and 12:00.

Christmas Hampers

We were able to give out some tin cans for collection of money for our Christmas hamper project before in person church paused. If you were unable to get one and would still like to collect your change for this cause we encourage you to be creative and design your own can or jar for collection. When we resume church activities we will collect the jars and cans and still credit you for a tax receipt.

Thanks for your help

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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



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!