

***At our Council meeting on May 26th,
our chair, Paul Pierson, shared this message:***

You're asked whether or not your church is open...

Our church is already open.

We are open to the Spirit's leading.

We are open to new opportunities for mission.

We are open to the stirring challenge of the call to discipleship.

We are open to anyone who wants to join us on the journey of faith.

We are open to learning new ways to tell our old story.

We are open to ecumenical and interfaith dialogue.

We are open to criticism when we fall short.

We are already open.

We just happen to be worshiping in our homes, for now, as a way of promoting safety and mitigating risk, as an expression of the love we have for our neighbours, and as an acknowledgment that any reckless behaviour on our part could have a devastating effect on others.

And we are grateful for the technology that makes this possible, aware that we are richly blessed.

But we are already open.

*Ed McLeod, Pastor
First Presbyterian Church,
Raleigh, NC*



Indigenous History Month



In June, Canadians celebrate National Indigenous History Month to honour the history, heritage and diversity of Indigenous peoples in Canada. It is also an opportunity to recognize the strength of present-day Indigenous communities.

National Indigenous History Month is a time for learning about, appreciating and acknowledging the contributions First Nations, Inuit and Métis people have made in shaping Canada.

Along with our Government, we recognize the importance and sacred nature of cultural ceremonies and celebrations that usually occur during this time. While celebrations and events for National Indigenous History Month may be different this year than those in the past, we can still share and learn from stories, traditions and culture in new ways that keep us together and connected.

The history of First Nations, Inuit and Métis is essentially the very history of our country as they are the first peoples of Canada and continue to play important roles in its development and its future.

Celebrating National Indigenous Peoples Day

Indigenous organizations and the Government of Canada together chose the date of **June 21**, (summer solstice), for National Aboriginal Day, now known as National Indigenous Peoples Day. For generations, many Indigenous peoples and communities have celebrated their culture and heritage on or near this day due to the significance of the summer solstice as the longest day of the year.

This is a day for all Canadians to recognize and celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. The Canadian Constitution recognizes these three groups as Aboriginal peoples, also known as Indigenous peoples.

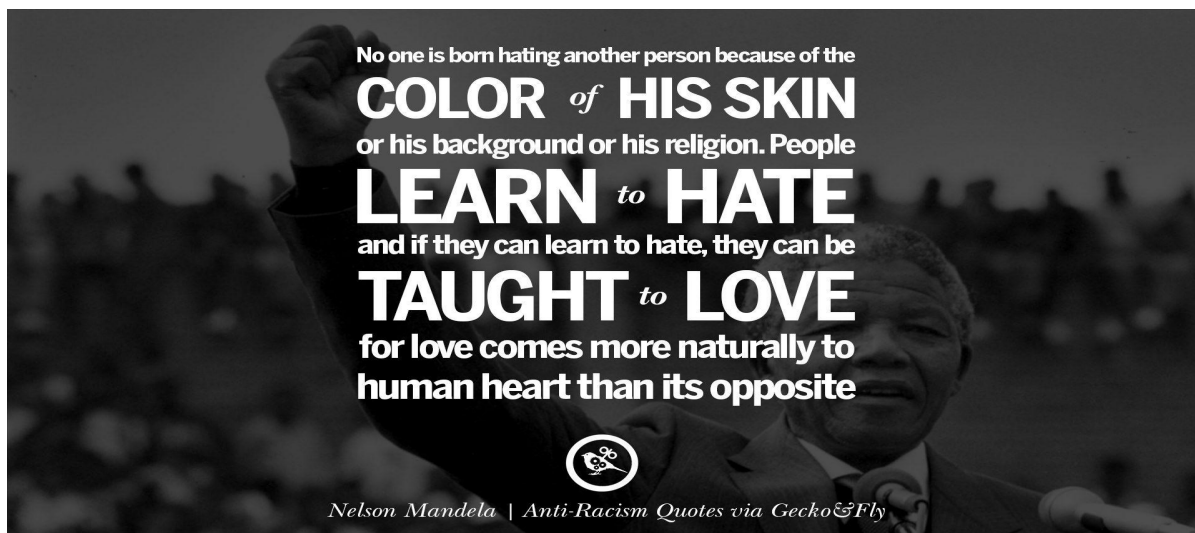
Although these groups share many similarities, they each have their own distinct heritage, language, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs.

In Canada, National Indigenous Peoples Day was first celebrated in 1996, after it was proclaimed that year by then Governor General of Canada Roméo LeBlanc.

Let us offer Prayers and Love to our Indigenous Brothers and Sisters, as we celebrate and honour their heritage and culture, not just in June, but always!

For more information on Indigenous History Month, go to www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca





Pray, Praise, Ponder

LOVE OVER HATE.
LOVE OVER INDIFFERENCE.
LOVE OVER IGNORANCE.
LOVE OVER EGO.
LOVE OVER FEAR.
LOVE OVER BARRIERS.
LOVE OVER BORDERS.
LOVE OVER
AND OVER
AND OVER
AGAIN.



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.*

JUNE IS PRIDE MONTH



Health concern restrictions surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in the cancellation of most of the Pride Month's activities this year. The pandemic has had a major impact on the LGBTQ community accentuating the underlying issues of homelessness, unemployment, poverty and health. Our two major partner organizations, AIDS Committee of Durham Region and PFLAG Durham, have continued most of their valuable work throughout the pandemic. Services such as foodbanks, support groups, referrals and individual counselling services are ongoing. This community remains deserving of our ongoing support.

Westminster United Church will again be displaying the Rainbow Flag in our narthex window for the month of June. This is a highly visible way to demonstrate our continued support and solidarity to the community at large.

We are also pleased to again be involved in the 2020 AIDS International Candlelight Memorial, this year. Our original plan had us again hosting the event in our sanctuary on May 31st. For obvious reasons, the in-person event had to be cancelled but we are now very glad to be able to join together virtually. The event was held on May 31st and is available online on YouTube.

As the restrictions ease, we will be looking to support, whenever opportunities are presented. Westminster United is proud to be an Affirming and Inclusive congregation.

Parish Mosaic Committee



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*.

Westminster's Congregational Prayer Walk Sunday, June 7 at 3:00pm

Let's pray together for our community and our world beginning in our own neighbourhoods.

We will walk separately but together knowing that others in the congregation are doing the same thing at the same time.



Offer blessings for the people, homes, schools, stores, hospitals or community centres you pass.

Use the acronym **BLESS**:

B - Body - PRAY for the health and well-being of others.

L - Labour - PRAY for the work people do (health care, first responding, sanitation, retail, hydro transportation, construction, etc.)

E - Emotional/Environmental - PRAY for the emotional well-being of others and for God's Creation.

S - Social - PRAY for relationships; PRAY for our human family, the vulnerable, the isolated, the hurting, the marginalized.

S - Spiritual - PRAY with an openness to seeing something new, to seeing God at work.

Walk and Pray with us as together we practice social distancing with spiritual nearness, loving God and loving neighbour.



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

**Rendez-vous is ONLINE
this year!**

REGISTRATION is NOW OPEN and it's FREE!

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

Rendez-vous is for youth and young adults ages 14 - 29.

To REGISTER or for more INFORMATION contact
Cathy Shaw at westminster.cathy@gmail.com



HOLDEN



Have you heard? Were you there?

Monday, May 25th saw the debut of a new event at Westminster – Virtual Trivia Night. Whimsically named “MONDAY MAYHEM” (because our first challenge was in MAY!) by our Communication Committee, this event is designed to be a bi-weekly ‘Boredom Buster’. We spent an hour, from 8:00 to 9:00 p.m. last Monday evening, in a lighthearted competition answering 20 very random questions (*Did you know that a giraffe has only 7 bones in that very long neck?*) There were about 40 people involved - some singles, some couples and some family teams with 3 or 4 people playing.

The winners of the first MONDAY MAYHEM Trivia Night were the Baker Family. Congratulations on getting 15 correct answers!

Our next event is **Monday, June 8th at 8:00 p.m.** Check the weekly bulletin for the Zoom link to our next trivia challenge. Hope to see you there! By the way, if you have an idea for another ‘boredom buster’ which can be played via Zoom, please contact Bev at bcrumb@sympatico.ca or Cathy at westminster.cathy@gmail.com



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



Westminster would like to Congratulate our High School and Post-Secondary Graduates and wish them well as they continue along on their life's journey. May you always feel the love of God and this congregation, no matter where life might lead you! Many Blessings!

Anna Wiley

Graduated from O'Neil Collegiate with her sights set on an
"Acting for Media" Performing Arts Program.

Brock Pierson

Graduated from Brock University with a
Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) Degree

David Von Zuben

Graduated from the Protection, Securities and Investigations (PSI) Program
at Durham College

Jan Douglas Hendrikse

Graduated from Anderson Collegiate at heading to the University of Waterloo
for a five year Co-op Architecture Program

Kaitlyne Beriault

Graduated from Sinclair High School and on her way to Queens University
for Continuing Education (Con-Ed) with a focus on Science

This Month we Honour ALL Fathers...

New Dads

Grieving Dads

Veteran Dads

Dads in Heaven

Step-Dads

Grandfathers

Adoptive Dads

Godfathers

Dads-In-Law

Pet Dads

Expectant Dads

Honorary Dads

*Hope is not pretending that troubles don't exist.
It is the hope that they won't last forever.
That hurts will be healed and difficulties overcome.
That we will be led out of the darkness and into the sunshine.*

Celebrating Pentecost and the Birth of the Church

Miss Marissa learned about Pentecost while on our Zoom J.a.M Session
and decided to celebrate the Birth of the Church (and Pentecost)
with a delicious and awesome looking Birthday Cake!

Congratulations to Marissa and big sister Madelyn on their incredible baking skills!



How are you keeping busy?

Pat A. has been keeping busy while creating and recycling...all at the same time!

In the best recycling spirit, Pat has build beautiful Plant Towers, repurposing the previous side corners of his gazebo and forming them into 2, 4-sided towers.

It's just a matter of time before he will be enjoying the beauty of the honeysuckle plants and the cherry tomatoes he's growing.

What a wonderful way to keep busy while staying safely at home.



Foodbank News



Our Food Bank is an Essential Service and so we are Open every Tuesday from 10:00am - 12:00pm.

On Mondays from 10:00am - 12:00pm we accept Food and Monetary Donations from our very generous community.

We are seeing an increase in families using our Food Bank, therefore children's snacks, such as fruit cups, pudding cups and snack bars are important items.

We are also in need of instant coffee, tea, pasta sauce, canned meat / fish, canned fruit, jam, crackers, cookies and paper towels

Personal hygiene items are always greatly appreciated, such as Kleenex, toothpaste and shampoo.

Gift cards are being purchased from monetary donations to be distributed to clients so they can purchase perishable items.

Special thanks to Joanne MacPherson for her ongoing devotion to the Foodbank and for everyone who has helped in any way in this very important Outreach work!

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 with a tax receipt.

Thanks so much for your help!



Our Church Gardens Look Amazing!

The Buds and Shrubs crew had a terrific day of toiling in the gardens, and most of the work on the garden prep list is now complete:

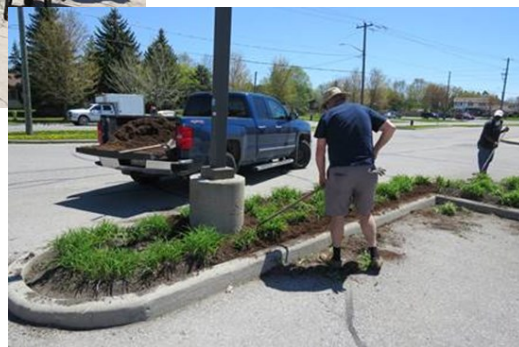
Ava T., James T., and Connor T. removed weeds and Yucca plants for replanting (*No, the weeds won't be replanted.*) and re-edged the east sanctuary and south east corner beds in prep for rototilling.

Bob D. single-handedly removed and bagged 48 orange (*we think they're orange*) lilies to give away.

Neville W. and King W. completed the work on parking island #2 (started by Jim and Joan W.) and Bob N. and Dave S. worked on deepening the edging of the peninsula garden. Weeds and grass were removed and a healthy dose of forest chips (3 yards) was spread on both lily gardens and the narthex butterfly garden.

Bob N. and Ron K. followed with a bit of clean-up, much supervision and verbal support.

Wow! Thank you to everyone for beautifying Westminster's gardens!



Diversity Embraced Here

C.A.R.E. (Christians Acting with Respect for the Earth)

What a Beautiful World

Friday May 22 was World Biodiversity Day, a time to reflect on the variety of creatures that reside on our planet. For this year's theme, "Our solutions are in nature," the United Nations invited us to both examine the intricate nature of our relationship with the natural world and to recognize that "despite all our technological advances we are completely dependent on healthy and vibrant ecosystems for our water, food, medicines, clothes, fuel, shelter and energy."



There are many opportunities to learn more about our natural world. Some ideas are listed below:

- ♦ Try to identify the different birds that you see on walks or in your backyard. Now that spring is here, many birds are migrating through our area, from hummingbirds to hawks. You might be amazed at what you see!
- ♦ Attend a nature webinar. The Toronto Region Conservation Area, for example, has a whole list of webinars for June including "Species at Risk in the Urban Jungle," "Gardening for Pollinators," "Nature in Your Neighbourhood," and "All About Bats," to name a few. See their calendar of webinars at https://trca.ca/get-involved/events/?mc_cid=fd0bdbb3f6&mc_eid=f08b8a5459
- ♦ Download some nature-based activities and worksheets for your children/grandchildren. One source you could try is Project Learning Tree: <https://pltcanada.org/> (see their Environmental Education section).
- ♦ Watch a nature-based documentary. There are many great ones out there, including *Jane*, *Mission Blue*, *Planet Earth* (I and II), *Blue Planet* (I and II), *Our Planet*.



Stewardship

Hello Friends,

Approximately 10 weeks ago, we were told to “go home and stay home”; “wash our hands for at least 20 seconds”; “sanitize EVERYTHING”; and of course, “wear a face mask”.

So as we obeyed the law and closed our church doors, there began a flurry of activities “behind the scenes”, both at the national level (with Webinars and calls for action from the United Church of Canada CFO) and locally, beginning with Rev. Michelle finding ways to deliver our Sunday Message, and with Paul Pierson, Council Chair, managing to get the services out to everyone. Then we had music added during the service, and singing, and pictures - from waving palm branches to beautifully coloured rocks, and “live” services via Zoom, including the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Yet, throughout this pandemonium of ever-changing information and exhausted front-line workers and unrelenting sadness at retirement homes, people were using social media to post touching acts of kindness, inspiring stories of people helping others (from big corporations to a youth running errands for his elderly neighbours), and of course ‘self-help’ ideas - from easy bread making to ‘no-sew’ face masks!

And throughout, we find the common theme of **sharing, caring and giving**. People have found ways to be good stewards themselves while also inspiring all kinds of stewardship opportunities – financial, time, discipleship and creativity. However, we really do not have to look very much further than among you, our congregation and ourselves, for examples of what we call “many sharing many unexpected gifts”:

1. We continue to pray for others as we hold our grieving church families in our tender prayers.
2. A Call Tree of about 20 volunteers has been set up to call and stay in contact with all our Westminster families.
3. All Committees continue to meet via Zoom, carrying on with the work of our church.
4. Many engage in the Hymn Sing and Campfire Songs with Heather VonZuben.
5. Cathy Shaw hosts Sunday morning J.a.M. Sessions and Thursday night Youth Group, *and*
6. She finds time with Bev Crumb and the Communication Committee to host our new Monday Mayhem Trivia Night.
7. There is a Sunday Check-in and Virtual Fellowship and Coffee time.
8. Sharing from our Wellness Committee, most recently, on “COVID-19 and Your Mental Health”
9. Westminster’s Foodbank continues to open every Tuesday because of your continued support (both financial and with groceries). It is now even more urgent that this Outreach ministry continue.
10. There has been waxing of floors and cleaning and sanitizing of the church.
11. The Weed Whackers are back, as scheduled, staying apart, but maintaining our lawns.
12. There is even painting happening because of our industrious Property Committee volunteers.
13. ‘Buds and Shrubs’ members have been finding ways to plant flowers while social distancing.

So, thank you for continuing to give generously and for being a part of “many sharing many unexpected gifts”. As we mark Pentecost, we find the following Stewardship theme:

“Stewards care passionately, humbly and graciously about God’s vision for the world”.

Thank you again for walking with God as we continue to appreciate how our world has changed. We thank God for the love and protection that He has provided, and we ask for continued blessings and for a grateful heart on this “new” journey of service and discipleship.

Blessings,

Margaret Suepaul, *Chair Stewardship/Finance*



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



Come one, come all... It's ONLINE PICNIC TIME! Sunday, June 28th

Not sure what it means to have an online Picnic?
We don't either, but that's not going to stop your
CE/J.a.M Teams from trying!

The picnic will be hosted on the Zoom platform,
immediately following an awesome
Live Zoom Worship Service at 10:30am,
led by J.a.M!

This is a RAIN or SHINE event (obviously),
so either way, plan to be part of the FUN!

Watch your E-mail Blasts for more info.
See you there!

Homelessness and Hunger --- in the Durham Region

Homeless are one of the most vulnerable groups in the midst of the current COVID-19 pandemic. Given the changing times and present physical distancing that we are all experiencing, it is even more in the headlines, with both reported cases and deaths.

As you know, Westminster United Church is a very active participant in the daily hot meal program at **St. Vincent's Kitchen**, operated by Durham Outlook (<https://durhamoutlook.com/> or <https://www.facebook.com/durham.outlook/>). 20-30 people volunteer the first Wednesday of each month for meal serving and clean-up. [For now, this daily program has been suspended until further notice.]

We are also active supporters of **The Refuge Outreach Youth Outreach Centre** in Oshawa (<https://refugeoutreach.com/> or <https://www.facebook.com/refugeoutreach/>) This includes their annual *Walk in the Cold* fundraiser. [Presently their services have been adapted, including just a takeout food option.]

And, of course, our own **Westminster Food Bank** continues to be open every Tuesday morning for needy recipients.

Yes, homelessness is and continues to be a reality here in our own backyard, within the Durham Region.

In March last year (2019), I had the opportunity to attend the first **Durham Region Homelessness Prevention Conference** on behalf of Westminster's Outreach Committee. For me personally, it was indeed an eye-opening experience. I found some sessions quite startling --- to hear firsthand the reality of homelessness and other ancillary issues (i.e. sex trafficking). Besides the 6-8 plenary presentations over the two days, there were 3-4 breakout sessions. I chose to attend a 2-session combo – a Blanket exercise, which was very moving and enlightening. Another was a very real presentation about youth/young adult sex trafficking. The key presenter was Karly Church, a victim herself and now lead counsellor here in Durham.

Last official stats (2017) list 300+ identified homeless in Durham Region, plus the “hidden homelessness” --- in abandoned buildings, barns, under bridges, along rivers or in any green space. From December to March some revert to couch surfing, etc. One example was finding a 72-year-old grandmother in a barn. Visible homeless are found typically around shelters and food banks. We need to be aware of services and be a point of contact for the homeless and destitute, etc., including: motel programs, shelters, crisis beds, youth centres, housing outreach agencies, harm reduction, transportation alternatives, medical services, food banks, repositories, etc.

Presently, at least within the city of Oshawa, there is an ongoing discussion about further engaging/mobilizing faith communities, convened by Mayor Dan Carter. As one presenter at the conference stated, “We have to fix the basement pipe (the in-flow) – providing housing first. Solving “Homeless-101” -----then at the same time move onto prevention.”

(Continued on Next Page)

Homelessness and Hunger *(continued)*

Here are some further stats that were presented:

Percentages of homeless: LGBTQ2C/30%, Indigenous/30%. Racialized/28%.
40% are 16 years old or younger.
85% mental healthcare-related – including 42% involving suicidal issues.
58% were pre-involved with Child Protection agencies.
50% not actively employed or in educational training.

The homeless group has a large vulnerability to be victims of crime and sex trafficking. At the same time, youth don't usually identify as being in the "homeless" category. Family conflict can be at the root of most homelessness. Again, "Fixing the pipe" is the core issue. A key question for youth – are you safe at home? More than just physical, it can also be interpreted as a threat to any family member, real or perceived.

I came away inspired to do something further and more concrete --- as an individual and a faith community here at Westminster. In the months ahead, you will undoubtedly hear more from Westminster's Outreach Committee and Parish Mosaic sub-Committee.

Stay healthy and safe --- and thanks be to God for our cozy places of abode. May we work towards the same for ALL Durham Region citizens.

Paul Kneebone (*Member – Outreach Committee*)

Lessons Learned from the COVID-19 Crisis

One of the many things we've learned during this pandemic is that it is possible to change the way we live and work—in a way that is better for the future of our planet. While climate change is not at the forefront of the news right now, it remains a crisis that we have to work on mitigating and adapting to. Some of the lessons we have learned from the COVID-19 crisis can be applied to the climate crisis, including:

- We need to trust and follow scientific advice.
- We need to protect vulnerable populations.
- We need to be prepared. Preparedness is less costly than reaction.
- Local food supplies are critical.
- We need to protect biodiversity.
- Global problems require global solutions. It is possible for individuals, communities, cities, provinces and countries to work together against a common threat.
- We can reduce our carbon footprint and form new habits.
- Getting outdoors has natural healing benefits.
- Curbing GHG-emitting transportation results in cleaner skies, cleaner air and fewer health threats.

It's time to think and talk about what kind of world we want to live in. As with the COVID crisis, addressing climate change will require drastic changes that, if made soon enough, will prepare and protect us all. By following these lessons, we can be better stewards of God's creation.

--from the **Climate Disruption Mitigation Committee (CDMC)**



LET'S LAUGH...

NO, I'M NOT COMING DOWN!
We've been on 20 walks today. Leave me alone.



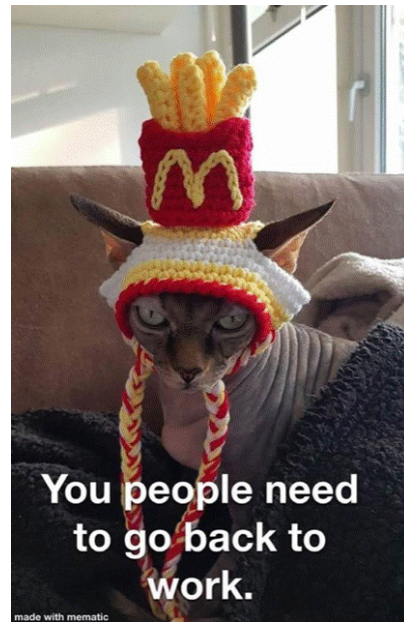
Bob cat



When dog groomers go into lockdown, and customers are left to their own devices



People in quarantine have way too much time on their hands!



You people need to go back to work.



**15 days containment I'M FINE
THANK YOU**

13:20

**Westminster United Church
Statement of Operations**

	APR ACTUALS	JAN - APR ACTUALS	MAY FORECAST	JUN FORECAST
RECEIPTS				
Total Offerings (LF & BF)	18,599	76,647	20,500	17,500
Offerings (LF & BF) - PAR	12,682	50,440	12,500	12,500
Offerings (LF & BF) - Envelopes	3,592	23,632	5,000	3,000
Offerings (LF & BF) - Electronic	2,325	2,575	3,000	2,000
Donations (see Note 1)	3,303	13,211	1,800	1,500
Fundraising Income	-	593	-	-
Rentals - Long Term	-	15,476	-	-
Rentals - Short Term	-	250	-	-
Other Income	1,417	5,019	60	60
TOTAL RECEIPTS - excl M&S	23,319	111,196	22,360	19,060
DISBURSEMENTS				
Salaries & Benefits	20,777	90,005	21,000	21,442
Property	7,253	24,921	6,500	4,500
Mortgage Expense (see Note 2)	-	8,010	-	-
UCC Assessment (see Note 3)	-	3,611	-	1,805
Other	2,105	8,280	2,940	3,522
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS - excl M&S	30,135	134,827	30,440	31,269
SURPLUS / - DEFICIT - excl M&S	-	6,817 -	8,080 -	12,209
Offerings - Mission & Service Offerings	1,890	7,360	1,600	1,600
Mission & Service Commitment	1,890	7,360	1,600	1,600
TOTAL RECEIPTS - incl M&S	25,208	118,556	23,960	20,660
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS - incl M&S	32,025	142,187	32,040	32,869
SURPLUS / - DEFICIT - incl M&S	-	6,817 -	8,080 -	12,209
Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy - CEWS (see Note 4)	10,000	15,000	10,000	5,000
SURPLUS / - DEFICIT after CEWS	3,183 -	8,631	1,920 -	7,209

Notes

1. Monetary donations to the Foodbank in April were \$1,800.
2. Mortgage payments have been suspended indefinitely effective Apr 1st (interest continues to accrue).
3. April UCC Assessment payment deferred to December 2020.
4. Wage Subsidy not yet received (application in process).

AVAILABLE FUNDS AS ON APR 30/2020

Contingency for day-to-day operations	30,286
Reserve for Capital Investments	49,873
Reserve for Ministerial Investments	48,050
TOTAL RESERVE FUNDS	128,209
Non-Restricted Funds	18,774
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS	146,983

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!