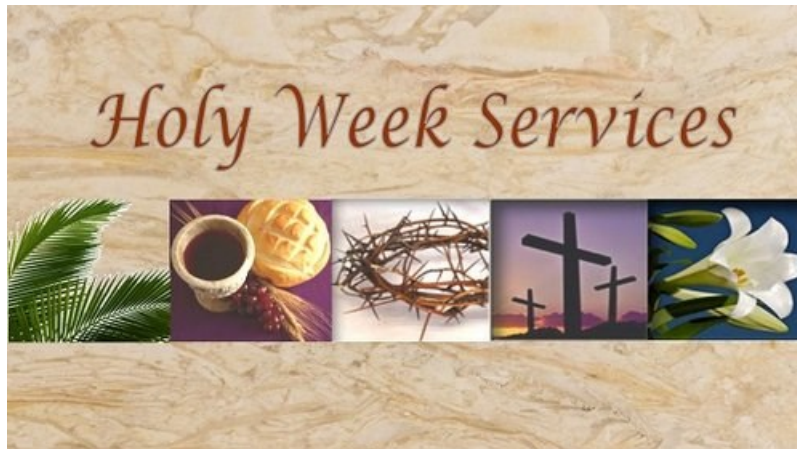
A photograph of a field of poppies with a text overlay. The image shows several poppies in various stages of bloom, with some fully open and others as buds. The colors range from bright orange to pale yellow and white. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue sky. The text is written in a black, handwritten-style font and is positioned on the left side of the image, overlaid on a semi-transparent white rectangular area.

Rejoice in
hope,
be patient
in
tribulation,
be constant
in prayer.
Romans 12:12



Palm Sunday Service

Sunday, March 28th
Online Service with Palm Parade
10:30am

Maundy Thursday Service

Thursday, April 1st
Zoom Service with Communion
7:00pm

Good Friday Service

Friday, April 2nd
Online Service
10:00am

**Early Easter Morning
Communion Service**

Sunday, April 4th
Format to be Announced
8:15am

Easter Sunday Service

Sunday, April 4th
Online Service
10:30am

You're Invited to take part in
**WESTMINSTER'S
PALM PARADE!**

Come join in the fun of this Virtual Parade,
as we gather our hearts and wave our palm branches
to celebrate the triumphant arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem!

Here's how you and your family can take part and be connected to others,
as we prepare our Processional for Palm Sunday!

What is it?

A video made by our resident movie maker (Rev. Michelle).

What do you need to do?

Get crafty or creative (or both). Get the whole family involved. Make a palm branch out of anything you choose or take a walk and find a branch you like. Once you've done that, take a picture and send it to this email address: rev.m.robinson@gmail.com

When do you need to do it?

As soon as possible would be awesome, as Palm Sunday is quickly approaching.

We will need your still photos no later than Sunday, March 21st..so start crafting or collecting now!

Anything else?

There are two things actually...

1. Your photos will work best for the video if taken in a landscape format (*horizontal, not vertical*)
2. Have lots of fun with this, involve your loved ones and afterward, find a place for your palm branch in your window or somewhere where it can be seen and shared with your neighbours.



Easter Flowers

Every Easter Sunday, Westminster's sanctuary is decorated with beautiful spring flowers expressing our joy that Christ has risen. Even though we are in a pandemic, this tradition will continue, following safe guidelines as directed by the Province and the Region of Durham Health Department.

The flowers will be purchased with memorial donations to Westminster in honour of friends or loved ones and their names will be acknowledged Easter Sunday and in the April edition of the *Westminster World* newsletter.

Following the Easter Service, the flowers will be distributed safely to those who may need a little extra cheer to let them know we are thinking of them.

The list of recipients is compiled by the Ministry and Office staff, the Wellness Committee and the Friendly Visitors. If you know of someone who would appreciate a gift of flowers, please notify the church office by e-mail: wuc@westminster-uc.ca or by phone: 905-723-6442

Any memorial funds left over from the purchase of the flowers will go to the General Fund of Westminster. The full amount of your donation will appear on your tax receipt.

Donations will be received until the end of March.

There are 3 ways to donate:

E-transfer to wuc@westminster-uc.ca:

In the "Memo / Message" section, please include "*Easter Flowers in memory of ...*"

Canada Helps:

Select "Easter Flowers" under the Fund option.

In the "*Dedication Information*" field, click on either "*in memory of*" or "*in honour of*" and enter name(s).

Mail to Westminster:

Cheque or cash – indicate "*Easter Flowers*" on the envelope and/or cheque.

Be sure to ***include the name of the person(s) for whom you wish to remember.***

Mailing address: 1850 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario L1N 3P2



***If you are able to assist with the delivery of the flowers on Sunday April 4th,
or if you would like more information, please contact:
Wellness Committee, Crystal Smith at
crystal.a.smith55@gmail.com or 905-809-8484.***



Congratulations!

The FINAL total is in...

TOGETHER Westminster raised \$9109.00

in our Coldest Night of the Year Walk for The Refuge
...that's a whopping \$7,609 over our original Fundraising Goal.

Thank you for your generosity, your time and your prayers!



OUTREACH UPDATE

Food Bank

Since Jan 5th, we have had 120 clients and their families served by our food bank. Being busier and with limited storage in the back office, we have moved our supplies into the computer room. The counter space allows us to see our stock, check expiry dates more easily and take advantage of sales on staple items. We are very excited to start using this space that we will now be calling **The Pantry**.

We continue to accept food donations on Wednesdays at the church, from 10:00am-12:00pm.



Because we have this larger space and greater demand, we are holding a **Spring Food Drive** on **Saturday, March 27th** from **12:00pm-2:00pm**.

We will accept items at the gym doors.

Items needed include: mayonnaise (*regular size*), cooking oil, juice boxes, peanut butter, jam, chunky soup, instant coffee, powdered whitener, canned meats (*tuna, salmon, ham, corned beef*), pasta sauce, Kraft dinner, rice, alphagetti, zoodles, beefaroni, cereal and instant oatmeal, black beans, chick peas, kidney beans, canned fruit, kids' snacks (*granola bars, rice krispies, pudding cups, fruit cups*), toiletries (*soap, tooth paste and brushes, shampoo*) laundry and dish soap, toilet paper, paper towels, and Kleenex

***At this same Donation Drive, we will also collect for:
The Refuge, Back Door Mission and Gate 3:16***

The Refuge

Clothing: Spring-type jackets/coats (new or gently used), sneakers/running shoes (new), men's underwear (new - esp. smaller sizes)

Food: Chunky soups (w/ pop-off tops), canned meat (esp. chicken/ham w/ pop-off tops)

Back Door Mission

Food: Canned evaporated milk, canned corn beef & luncheon meat, canned veggies & fruit, 1 litre tetra pack juice (all flavours), fruit & apple sauce cups, almond milk (small/unrefrigerated), instant coffee (jars or packs), sweet breakfast cereals (400g size – Fruit Loops, Captain Crunch, Frosted Flakes)

Gate 3:16

Clothing: Running shoes (M&F – new), T-shirts (M&F – new), hoodies (new), jeans/dockers (new - esp. men's sizes 30-34, no dress pants)

Food: Plastic cutlery, cream/sugar packs, fruit cups, healthy snacks (e.g. granola bars), zip-lock bags (all sizes), parchment paper and other kitchen wraps

Tin Cans for Outreach

We have tin cans available again to collect your change throughout the year. This money is mostly used to buy the gift cards for the food portion of our Christmas hampers. The cans are available on Wednesday mornings from 10-12 at the church and we will also have them at our Spring food drive on March 27th. You will receive a tax receipt for the money contributed. If you would like a tin can and can't pick it up, please email: wucchristmashampers@gmail.com)



The next gathering of the Book Club is on
Wednesday, March 24th, 2021 at 1:00pm via Zoom
(through the internet or via phone hook up).

From the comfort of your home we will be discussing the book:
BECOMING
by Michelle Obama.

In a life filled with meaning and accomplishment, Michelle Obama has emerged as one of the most iconic and compelling women of our era. As First Lady of the United States of America -- the first African American to serve in that role -- while also establishing herself as a powerful advocate for women and girls in the U.S. and around the world, she dramatically changed the ways that families pursue healthier and more active lives, and stood with her husband as he led America through some of its most harrowing moments.

In her memoir, a work of deep reflection and mesmerizing storytelling, Michelle Obama invites readers into her world, chronicling the experiences that have shaped her--from her childhood on the South Side of Chicago to her years as an executive balancing the demands of motherhood and work, to her time spent at the world's most famous address. With unerring honesty and lively wit, she describes her triumphs and her disappointments, both public and private, telling her full story as she has lived it--in her own words and on her own terms. Warm, wise and revelatory, BECOMING is the deeply personal reckoning of a woman of soul and substance who has steadily defied expectations--and whose story inspires us to do the same.

At this gathering, we will be choosing our books for the next year.

Please email your suggestion list of

5 general titles (fiction or non-fiction) and 3 classic titles that you would like to reread.

All title need to be emailed to Susan (auntx2@gmail.com) by Wednesday, March 10th, 2021.

All are welcome. To borrow the book or for more information,
please call Susan @ 905-493-3122.

**If you have not attended a previous book club gathering,
please let Susan know that you are interested
so that she can email you the Zoom link information.**

"The more you **read**
the more **things** you know.
The more that you **learn**
the more **places** you'll go."
-Dr. Seuss

*Honouring the memory of Dr. Seuss'
on what would have been his 117th Birthday
March 2, 1904*





Pray, Praise, Ponder

*The angels cannot
change a world
of hurt and pain
into a world
of love, of justice
and of peace.
The task is ours to do.*

(from MV #212)



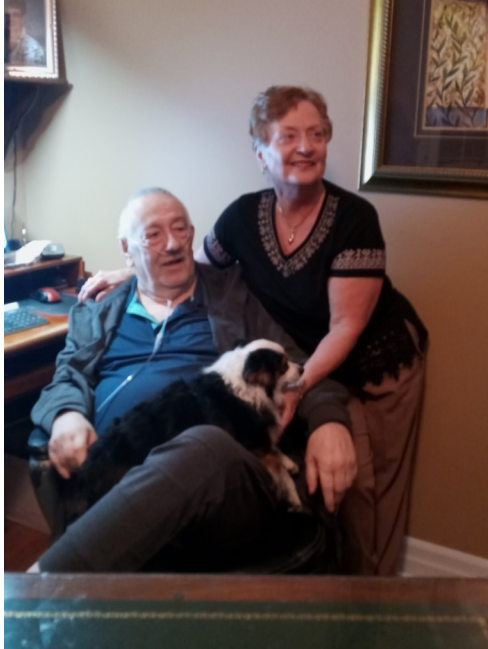
Our Prayer Team is here for you!

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
905-723-6442.

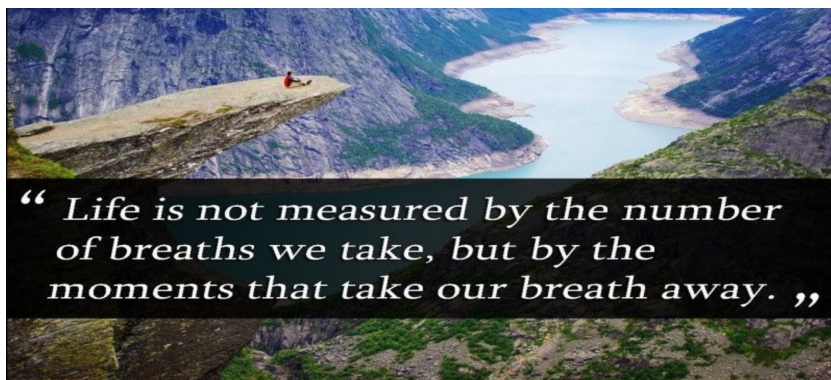
*May you feel God's love and know God's grace
as you experience the beauty of God's world each day.*

Celebrations

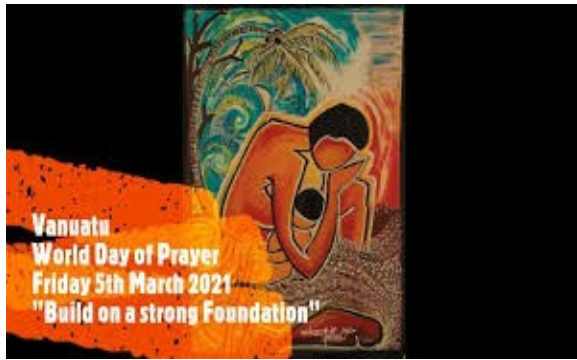


Congratulations to
Sharon and Dennis Munro
on their
55th Anniversary!

Birthday Blessings to
Chris Shkolnik
on his
25th BIRTHDAY!



*“ Life is not measured by the number
of breaths we take, but by the
moments that take our breath away. „*



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

The World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement which brings Christians of many traditions together to observe a common day of prayer each year.

This annual day of prayer was founded by women nearly one hundred years ago, and to this day continues to be organized and presented by women around the world on the first Friday of March.

The motto of the World Day of Prayer movement is ***Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action***. Through our participation in the World Day of Prayer, we at Westminster affirm that prayer and action are inseparable and that both have immeasurable influence on the world.

International Communities of Faith take turns writing each year's World Day of Prayer Worship Service and this year our UCW, along with many other churches in our community have proudly provided an online Service written by women from the South Pacific nation of Vanuatu. The theme of this year's worship was "Build on a Strong Foundation".

We offer our thanks to our UCW for hosting this important Service, to Rev. Michelle for her insightful message and to the women of Vanuatu for their words of hope and love. May we continue to offer prayer for all God's global children.

A Prayer for World Day of Prayer

Teach me the language of prayer, God.
 Help me to hear prayers of thanksgiving
 in the laughter of young children and old friends.
 Help me to feel prayers of lamentation
 in the silent tears of strangers and loved ones.
 Help me to witness prayers of intercession
 in small acts of kindness and service.
 Teach me, God,
 how to pray with my whole being.
 Amen.

*(Alydia Smith, from Parables, Prayers, and Promises (UCPH);
 a prayer for World Day of Prayer)*



An Old Irish Blessing

May the road rise up to meet you.
 May the wind always be at your back.
 May the sun shine warm upon
 your face, and rains fall soft
 upon your fields.
 And until we meet again,
 May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY

How did you celebrate Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day)?



Monday Mayhem Trivia!

If you're looking for something to do that will connect you with others, make you laugh and maybe give you some fun facts to share at your next party, then give our Trivia Night a try.

Join us on **March 29 at 8:00pm**
No skills are required!

Watch the email Blasts for Zoom Link information or contact Cathy Shaw at westminster.cathy@gmail.com

NOTHING SHOULD
GO BACK TO
NORMAL.
NORMAL WASN'T
WORKING.
IF WE GO BACK TO
THE WAY THINGS
WERE, WE WILL
HAVE LOST THE
LESSON.
MAY WE RISE UP
AND
DO BETTER.

Rain Barrel Fundraising Sale

Westminster United Church

\$70 Rain Barrels (Includes a \$10 Delivery fee*)

Order online effective

March 22nd

www.rainbarrel.ca/westminster
for guaranteed availability

Rain Barrels include a leaf and mosquito filter, spigot, and overflow hose.



If you wish, you can add any of the following to your purchase:

\$25 Downspout Diverters:

Redirects water to one or more rain barrels, pools or hot tubs. Prevents excessive overflow and simplifies the winterization process.

\$10 Flexible Downspout Pipes:

Easily connects downspout to your rain barrel.

\$30 Rain Barrel Stands:

Elevates rain barrel to improve watering can access and increase water flow.

Rain Barrel Benefits:

- Healthier gardens
- Environmentally conscious
- Saves money and water
- Protects local waterway
- Reduces risk of flooding

Delivery Details:

Week of April 26th – 30th

****Contactless and Safe
Right to Your Door!***

For information, please contact:

Margaretsuepaul@gmail.com

Brianwoodlock@rogers.com

 **RainBarrel.ca**
905-545-5577 | Info@RainBarrel.ca

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

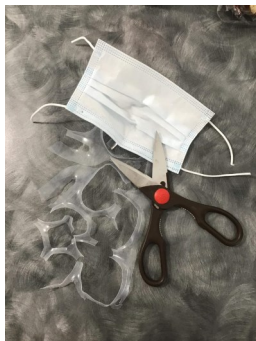
When our world is white with snow, it is easy to look at Creation with praise and gratitude. But, when it melts, a lot of litter comes to light! Google says that litter encourages insects, clogs drains, pollutes natural resources, can be a safety hazard and can turn away tourists.

It can also ruin our enjoyment of a good walk!

Let's be good stewards of our community.

Litter is ubiquitous! And, its cleanup is "up to us".

So, pick a windless day, pull on some latex gloves, get a garbage bag and a grocery bag (for cans and bottles) and grab some tongs. You and your neighbours will enjoy your next litter-less outing.



A new tip: To protect wildlife, before discarding face masks, **cut the elastic straps.**

A reminder: To protect wildlife, **cut the plastic rings** on beverage containers/packages.



Carol O'Neil has produced 10 videos examining ways to find peace in our new rhythms of daily life. The first is entitled Spiritual Wellness and is posted on the CrossTalk Fellowship site. In the coming weeks, additional videos will be featured on this site, and members are invited to post their comments.



Join Carol in this online video series that examines ways to find peace in our new rhythms of daily life.

View at: <https://crosstalk.wucfellowship.ca/>



Since Frewenyi and her family's arrival in August 2017, we have learned that Frewenyi's brother Mehbratan was somewhere in Africa after escaping Eritrea. Eventually we learned that he was at a detention camp in Libya.

Libya has been going through a civil war for approximately ten years with thousands of people killed and horrendous living conditions for refugees like Mehbratan. Libya has a significant population of refugees who are hoping to cross the Mediterranean. Those who are not successful are held in detention camps and exist in the worst of conditions. Mehbratan was in such a detention camp. These camps have no oversight and those imprisoned are fortunate to get bread and water during the day. Payment of a bribe is often the only way out.

Bridge to a New Home have worked through the United Nations to free Mehbratan from these inhumane conditions, and we were overjoyed to learn that he was recently freed and relocated to a "safe house". Frewenyi and her family are ecstatic and so eager to have him join them in this wonderful country and community. We have confirmed with the United Nations that we are prepared to sponsor Mehbratan both legally and financially. While the pandemic has slowed the number of refugees resettling in Canada, we are thrilled that it does continue. We pray for a positive outcome and the day we will actually be able to meet Mehbratan in person.

This group has had the joy of experiencing several success stories and we are excited to continue on that path where we can provide real opportunity where there was none.

God Bless!

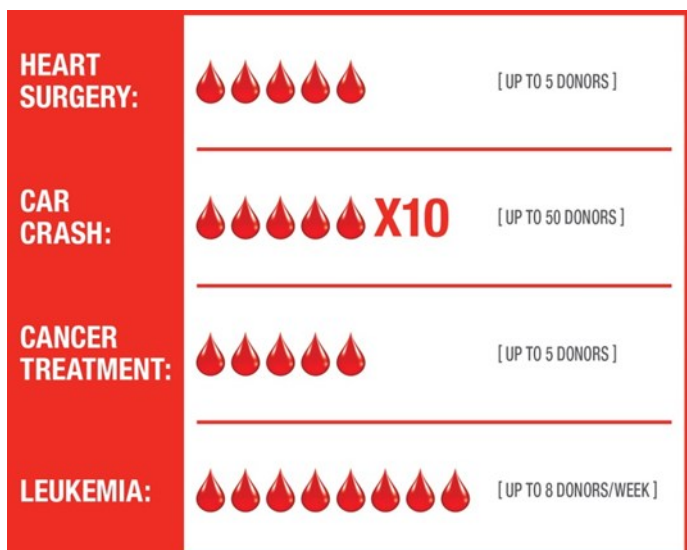
Please GIVE the GIFT OF LIFE!

The Blood Donation Centre at 1300 Harmony Rd. N. in Oshawa remains open throughout the pandemic for Blood Donations and to provide essential blood products for patients in need.

If you are healthy and can Donate the Gift of Life, please do!

It really is "in you to give"... and you'll be glad that you did!

Book now at blood.ca or by calling **1 888 2 DONATE** (1-888-236-6283)



The United Nations has declared
March 21, 2021,
**International Day for Elimination
of Racial Discrimination.**

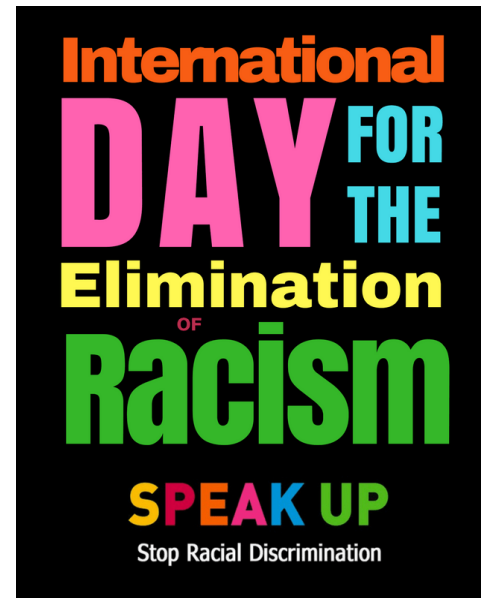
The theme for 2021 is:
Youth Standing Up Against Racism.

The following statement is included in the UN Declaration:

“Every person is entitled to human rights without discrimination. The rights to equality and non-discrimination are cornerstones of human rights law”. Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”. Furthermore, based on Article 2, “everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration, without distinction of race or any other kind”.

Yet racism, xenophobia and intolerance are problems prevalent in all societies, and discriminatory practices are widespread, particularly targeting migrants and refugees as well as people of African descent. Societies are urged to take comprehensive measures to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and to promote tolerance, inclusion, unity and respect for diversity.

Every day, each of us can stand up against racial prejudice and intolerant attitudes. In every word we say, every thought we think, every action we take, let's follow Christ's example of inclusion, acceptance and unconditional love.



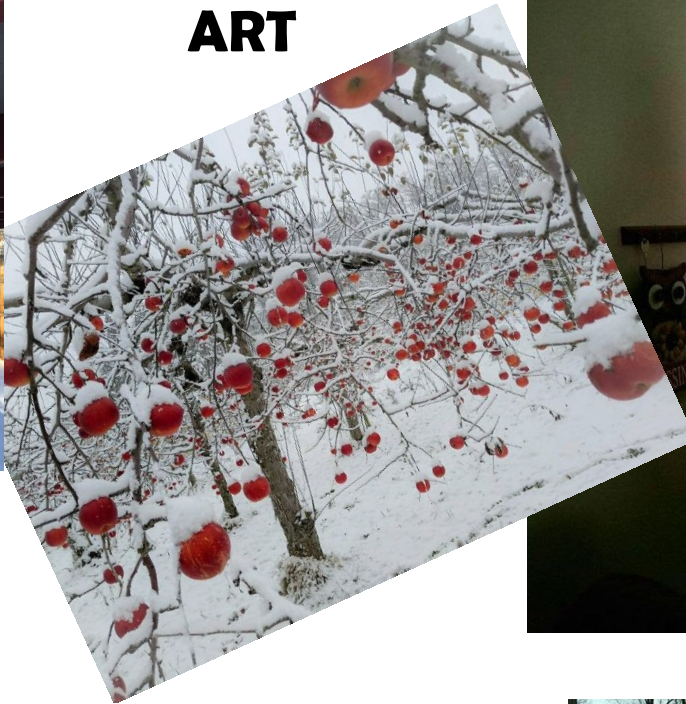
**There's nothing
complicated
about equality**

Alice Paul (1885–1977)

Darkness cannot drive out darkness,
only **light** can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate,
only **love** can do that.
- Martin Luther King Jr.
where-the-heart-is.tumblr.com



SNOW ART



From the Climate Disruption Mitigation Committee



World Water Day is on **Monday, March 22nd** and the theme this year is '**Valuing Water**'.

The celebration began in 1993 and focuses our attention on principles developed by the United Nations and the World Bank to ensure decisions taken by governments, businesses, communities and individuals will ensure a sustainable, water-secure world.

Some years ago, Kairos and some other organizations circulated a resolution to Canadian governments asking that they consider water a sacred resource and pledge to protect it. Durham Region did this. About a year later, it voted to construct a waste incineration plant on the shores of Lake Ontario which is the source of our water. So, if we care, we must remain vigilant and act responsibly.

World Water Day draws attention to many areas of the world that don't have access to clean, safe water. Canada carries its own shame in this regard. Despite indigenous women and children we label "water walkers", as they walk around lakes drawing attention to the problem, many reserves still do not have safe water. Our federal government has made many improvements but much remains to be done.

The climate crisis is creating new threats to this vital resource as sources dry up in this warming world. Old technologies, like desalination, will need to be scaled up in many areas.

There is a lot to learn about this common, everyday element. We live in Canada, on the shores of the Great Lakes. Let's celebrate our bounty on March 22!

Mary Shepherd (CDMC)

=====

=====

Hymn Sing Plus!

If you love to sing out loud in the comfort of your home, then join Heather on Zoom every Sunday at 7:00pm.

There is always a broad selection of music – some hymns and some popular songs...and something for everyone!

No musical talent required, but a love of singing and laughter is recommended.

Look for the Zoom Link in the weekly Friday Email Blast.



PIE Day is March 14 (3.14)



In the United Church and in partnership with Affirm United, PIE Day is an opportunity to celebrate our Affirming Ministry. We have the chance to think about how we embrace the concept of “PIE” in our community of faith.

Public (**P**), Intentional (**I**), and Explicit (**E**) are three ways for us to test just how real our welcome of gender or sexual diversity is. Each of these three concepts supports the other.

Public:

Being out and proud! LGBTQIA+ communities are often invisible, because of safety, and because of the assumption that everyone is heterosexual. When a ministry is Public in its welcome, it gives LGBTQIA+ people more space to be out and proud.

Being public: An Affirming Ministry uses symbols and signs which are echoed outside and inside the church building, in worship, and in all other facets of church life. It uses the language of gender and sexual diversity: it names us.

The ministry and its people show up in public places to support gender and sexual diversity, especially when local or global events lead to vulnerability, silencing, and violence. The broader community should know what an Affirming ministry stands for: a witness to the wider community that God’s love extends to everyone equally and without reserve. This is still a radical message!

Intentional:

Being LGBTQIA+-welcoming should always be an intentional act, not an afterthought or an easy assumption. Many people and groups, the church included, assume that gender and sexual diversity are now fully accepted, so “special” efforts are no longer needed. This isn’t true. The suicide numbers and the continuing violence alone tell us that we’re a long way from full acceptance. And even if LGBTQIA+ people were fully welcomed everywhere in Canada, the churches of today have inherited centuries of transphobic and homophobic oppression carried out in the name of the Gospel.

Affirming churches are still a minority, and that minority needs to express radical love with intention.

Being Intentional: An Affirming ministry is deliberate in their process of study, education and dialogue with members of their faith community (both during the Affirming process and as a piece of their ongoing work). They ensure that the history of oppression and discrimination by the Church is both understood and acknowledged, and that continued growth, education, and celebration are part of its ministry. An Affirming or affirming ministry continues to look for ways it can learn and grow. Including pronouns on name tags; watching for advocacy opportunities; continuing to expand and challenge our theology and biblical understandings through study and conversation... all of these, when done with Intention, can be transformative.

(Continued on Next Page)

PIE Day (Continued)

Explicit:

Name us! There is a power in a name, especially when LGBTQIA+ names have for centuries been used as insults, and Two Spirit identities have been violently oppressed and suppressed by Christianity and colonization.

An Affirming ministry needs to be loud and proud about who it welcomes. Many ministries have mentioned what happens when they put a rainbow banner or trans* flag outside their building: it disappears. Or they get angry emails. Or hateful graffiti. Their response: put the banner back up again. Incorporate the graffiti into art. Respond to the emails. And keep on naming their welcome.

Being Explicit: Affirming ministries should explicitly indicate in their Mission and Vision statement – and everywhere else! - that the LGBTQ+ community is a part of and embraced in all facets of church life. And as part of the Affirming process, their faith community will explore and explain how to live out that commitment.

(Source: The United Church of Canada Website)

As we approach our
5th Anniversary
as an
Affirming Faith Community,
may we continue to be
Public, **I**ntentional and **E**xplicit
in our mission
to share God's love with everyone!



Diversity is a fact
Inclusion is an ACT

Westminster United Church Statement of Operations

	ACTUAL	FORECAST	ACTUAL
	Jan 2021	Jan 2021	Jan 2020
RECEIPTS			
Offerings	18,868	20,500	20,561
Donations (see Note 1)	3,664	1,625	1,194
Rentals : Long Term	3,932	3,900	5,605
Other	91	83	997
TOTAL RECEIPTS	26,555	26,108	28,357
EXPENSES			
Salaries and Benefits	19,545	22,045	27,489
Property	6,266	6,870	5,787
Mortgage Payment (P & I)	2,670	2,670	2,670
Outreach	1,820	1,500	64
Other Expenses	677	1,940	969
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	30,978	35,025	36,979
NET SURPLUS / - DEFICIT	-4,423	-8,917	-8,622
 M&S Offerings	 2,295	 1,833	 2,146
M&S Disbursement	 2,295	 1,833	 2,146
	0	0	0

Note 1: Jan 2021 Donations of \$3.6K were all for the Foodbank

TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS = 265,364

LONG TERM LIABILITIES:

UCC MORTGAGE LOAN 374,078

CEBA (GOVERNMENT) LOAN 40,000



SAVE THE DATE
for our
**2nd Annual
Golf FUNdraiser!**

We had so much fun at our 1st Golf Day
so we decided to do it again.

This year our event will be held on
SATURDAY, MAY 29th

The date is booked
(same venue - Lyndebrook Golf Course)
and pending any COVID restrictions
to possibly alter our plans,
we will see you on the Golf Course!

Stay tuned for further details.

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!