

From Elizabeth's Desk

OUR PILGRIMAGE THROUGH LENT TO EASTER

After 33 years as an extrovert in full time ministry, I had a craving to do something distinctly singular, focused, and nurturing of my relationship with God. The "Camino de Santiago de Compestola", a pilgrimage through northern Spain to the tomb of that country's patron saint, felt like the perfect answer. Walking 740 km of the Camino offered me a disciplined way to block out the many voices, distractions, and sidetracks I'm always tempted explore. It offered the hope that I might hone my inner ear and eye and learn some important lessons from the ancients who had trod this path for 1200 years. The Camino felt like the way for me to transition my life and inaugurate this new enriching time of retirement in which I hope to deepen my respect for and response to life.

Jesus was a pilgrim. He traversed the Galilean hills teaching and responding to people he met and sharing the empowering, healing truth of God's presence and love, immediate, among them. We are told, he described this reality as "The Kingdom of God", a spiritual place both within and beyond this earthly place, and a time both within and beyond this earth bound time. And when people asked Jesus how they might access this 'kingdom' as its citizens, he responded ... Take up your cross and follow me.

Lent offers us a unique opportunity to follow Jesus. Set aside as a six week chapter in our Christian lives, it is reminiscent of the 40 days Jesus set aside for himself in the wilderness to hone his own faith. It was a time of preparation for the challenges that would face him on the road to Jerusalem and in the events of Passion Week.

We all face challenges on the road of life. We all need a faith that is equal to the tests. Surely we all want to know the companionship of Jesus, who walks with us each step of the way to death, through death and beyond.

There are many ways to make this pilgrimage. You will find them listed below. Join in where you can and enrich the journey for all of us. On the Camino, I soon discovered that I could not complete the journey completely alone. How great that we are not alone, but are pilgrims together, offering fellowship, wisdom, strength, care and blessings to one another .. as we go.

Elizabeth Eberhart-Moffat

Holy Week:

April 5: Palm Sunday services at 9 and 10:30 a.m.

April 9: Maundy Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

April 10: Good Friday service at 7:00 p.m.

April 12: Easter Services at 9:00 and 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary, with choirs, followed by refreshments.

WAYS YOU CAN PARTICIPATE AND DEEPEN YOUR FAITH...

Join in the Lenten Study along with members of "STILL POINT" every Wednesday at Noon. We will be using the 2009 United Church book of Lenten reflections on Jesus' words, entitled: Why Would Jesus Say That?

Buy a copy of the resource (above) and maintain your own daily devotions. \$10 each, in the office

Join us for Sunday Services in Lent: March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Enroll in this years "Week of Guided Prayer" – March 1st - 7th . Brochures available upstairs on the credenza

Walk the Labyrinth from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 21st, Good Friday, Apr. 10th and Saturday, April 11th.

Join Andre Auger and the Men's spirituality group beginning February 28th for a Lenten series on Saturday mornings -- 9:30 a.m. - 12 noon. Give yourself the gift of time, to meditate, reflect and share with other men in a safe and accepting environment. Contact Andre at 519-824-6329

Church Library - Check out the books on display for this Lenten Season

Support our United Church Mission and Service Fund

Contribute to our Lenten Appeal – PROJECT UGANDA. As part of Harcourt's global out-

reach, this project collects charitable donations to be used for school fees, hostel expenses, seminars and school supplies for students in Mbale Uganda. The Justice and Outreach Committee oversees the donations to the church and organizes the transfer of funds to the Norben Student Sponsorship Fund Committee in Mbale. Ben and Norma Fear have supervised this project and visit Mbale each year to consult with schools, check hostels, interview and encourage students. Your support is needed and is very much appreciated by these young students.

Worth Taking a Look At ...

COUNCIL CORNER

At the last Council meeting on January 21, a number of important issues were discussed and initiatives were agreed upon as we move forward as a congregation. Several of the items will also need approval at the Congregational meeting on February 22.

With the February Congregational meeting a month away, many items at this meeting concerned finances.

- Council approved the transfer of funds from the Manse Fund to the Legacy Fund as suggested by the Trustees.
- Our 2008 goal of \$100,000 for the M & S fund was met thanks to a concerted effort by the congregation. Council agreed on the same goal for 2009.
- The 50th Anniversary Fund is now closed

and all expenses have been paid out.

- Council approved an operating budget for 2009 which is an increase of 10.4%, due to increased Personnel costs for two full-time ministers.
- The Finance Committee was very encouraged by the 2008 budget surplus and feels that it is wise fiscal policy to carry a healthy surplus each year. Council agreed to set as a goal a surplus of 10% of the budget for each year in order to meet unexpected eventualities in income or expenses.
- Starting with the 2010 budget on a yearly basis, Council agreed to develop a two-year forecast of budget expectations.
- Finally, Council approved the financial statements of Project Uganda and agreed to continue support of this initiative and recommend same to the congregation for approval.

Council approved a Personnel motion that the yearly Contract Position of Children and Youth Ministry Associate at Harcourt Memorial United Church be 30 hours per week for the upcoming period of July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010. The Youth Ministry Review Committee and Personnel determined that the job could be performed in 30 hours per week with flexibility throughout the year. The two groups are reviewing the requirements for Youth and Family ministry with the intent to change the job description of the Children and Youth Ministry Staff Associate position to involve more of a whole family approach. Preparations and skill development are being worked on to transition the present Youth Worker to accommodate the new responsibilities.

'A New Model for Governance' was presented from the Coordinating Committee by Roz Stevenson, Vice Chair of Council, acknowledging that Council needs to become more streamlined and efficient. A lengthy discussion ensued, and a motion was approved to continue to refine the model in order to present it to the Congregation at a special meeting possibly in April.

A suggestion has been made to form Harcourt Neighbourhood groups in order to improve communication and involvement. This will be further dealt with at the March Council meeting.

EQUIPPING OURSELVES FOR THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE

A "heads-up" to all Council members and other lay leaders. Please set aside Tuesday evening April 21 and Saturday April 25 (9:30 AM - 1:00PM) for two important events in the life of Harcourt. On Tuesday evening, Anthony Robinson, noted author, pastor and consultant will tell the stories of what is happening to major mainstream North American Protestant churches and help us make sense of the societal challenges of our times. He will offer some concrete suggestions on the skills and strategies that lay leaders will need to help congregations evolve gently but firmly into a faithful future. On Saturday, there will be a workshop to help us digest Robinson's message and to begin the process of equipping ourselves for the transformation that is upon us. Please hold the dates; further details will follow.

FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY
From the Spiritual Life Committee

Body Prayer & Body-Centred Spirituality
by Vera Dyck

Body prayer and body-centred spirituality are practices grounded in the belief that our bodies are physical organisms created for the purpose of receiving life from the Divine, who is Life Itself. Our bodies house our spirits, embody Spirit, manifest the glory of God, and do God's work on this earth. For me, body prayer and other forms of body-centred spirituality express the understanding that every single one of us is an incarnating spirit, here on this planet to be the hands and face of Jesus. My belief is that God's Spirit is at all times and in every possible way striving ardently to reach every person alive in this world. This Spirit wants to communicate with each of us, to express and enact love, truth, mercy, healing, justice and forgiveness to us, in truly tangible ways that, like Jesus when walking on this earth, make the enormous and abundant love of the Divine Source of Life real to God's children – whether “believers” or not, readers of revealed Scriptures or not, people involved in organized religion or not. Body prayer and others forms of body-centred spirituality are uniquely satisfying to me because they physically enact my belief in the immanent and immediate presence of the Divine, and allow me to put these beliefs to use in my daily life in ways that feed me deeply and profoundly, help me to learn and grow, and provide me with energy and direction for my life and work.

In body-centred spirituality we do not strive to exit the body, quiet the voice of the body, ignore the body's callings, or dominate and subdue the body with the power of spirit or mind. Rather, we assume that spirit and mind (and the Spirit of God who pours life into our spirits minute by minute) are present in every cell of our bodies. We pay attention to our bodies. We invite our spirits to fully inhabit our bodies. We strive to listen to what they may have to say to us. We ask them to inform our minds. We honour them, treat them with loving kindness, and refrain from judging them.

In body-centred spirituality, we do not give the body permission to do whatever it wants regardless of other aspects of ourselves, regardless of the needs of other people, and regardless of our beliefs and values. Rather, in body-centred practices, we give our bodies an opportunity to share information with us, information about longings we have and distresses or wounds that we are carrying, that may not have come to our conscious awareness yet. We learn about ourselves, about what Spirit is seeking to teach us, about where we are being guided, and why. Then, we use all of our faculties to decide how to make use of this new information, what to express, and how. My experiences is that in making time and space to receive information from our bodies, we actually become less likely to act unconsciously out of the needs and demands of our bodies in ways that we may regret, or that may hurt others. Instead, we express ourselves more intentionally, whether in action, movement, or words.

Youth News

Body-centred spirituality practices almost always include paying attention to our breathing, and exploring the effects on us of different kinds of breathing. Some types of body-centred spirituality have an emotional & spiritual healing focus. Others are more geared to enhancing relaxation and physical health. Others are devotional, a way of worshipping. Yoga and Authentic Movement, and Sacred Dance all involve exploring different types of postures and movements together with breath awareness and noticing our physical sensations. Music, readings from Scripture or other sources, and other forms of artistic expression can be used to further ground, express, or enhance this learning from the body. Body Prayer is my term for dance that strives to give form to the prayers of one's heart in the embodied language of physical movement. Although it may be shared with others it is not a performance (just as someone standing to pray in church is not making a speech). And for this reason, body prayer requires no formal training in dance (I have none) – it only requires a heart that wants to pray with the whole body.

Please call me at 519-829-9508 or email me at vera.dyck@gmail.com if you would be interested in explorations of Body Prayer, and/or Sacred Dance. I am considering leading a group with this focus sometime this spring.

Where have all the adults gone?

Where have all the youth gone? is a common lament of post-modern church going adults particularly of the Traditional (born prior to the end of WW II) and Boomer (born between 1943-1960) generations.

As a minister with youth and children my lament, and I suspect the lament of post-modern church going youth and children: Generations Y (born between 1982-2002) and the Adaptives (born after 9/11), is where have all the adults gone?

We have a large group of extremely dedicated youth who regularly participate in our ministries to adults. We have a teen hospitality team of 10 who serve in the kitchen at every congregational meal or special event when food is offered and dishes need doing. We have a team of 4 who help care for our infants and toddlers on Sunday mornings and during congregational events when child care is needed. Daniel, our one man A/V team has trained on all the new equipment in the sanctuary and tutored himself in "Easy Worship", the software program we use to access multimedia in worship. He is in the booth virtually every Sunday morning making sure our adults can see, hear, and participate in worship. We have a worship team of 10 including whYBe, our youth band who regularly offer their artistic talents and gifts in worship.

On the flipside, we have a team of 6 extremely dedicated adults who regularly participate in our ministries with children and youth. 4 of those 6 are involved in our ministries with teens, 2 with Godly Play.

Where have all the adults gone? There is something deeply skewed with our understanding of the life and work of the church and our ministry with youth and children when virtually all youth who walks through the door jump at every opportunity to serve the adult contingent of our community and participate joyfully in our collective ministries while only 6 adults reciprocate on a regular basis.

I've said before that I believe that everyone who participates in the baptism of a child has something to contribute to that child's spiritual development. The soul care of children is an awesome responsibility, one every member in a community of faith needs to take seriously. Our programs and groups are opportunities for adults to build soul tending relationships with children and youth in our community.

Soul-tending is making muffins or a Sunday morning treat for the Breakfast Café youth group, or dropping some fresh fruit, veggies, or cheese and crackers off in the Toddler nursery or Godly Play room. Soul-tending is arriving at church a half hour earlier than usual to help set up Godly Play in the Friendship Room, and when at the end of a Godly Play session, a few adults help clean up so that our leaders can enjoy a coffee after a busy 40 minute session with our little ones.

Soul-tending is spending a Sunday morning in our new Toddler nursery reading and playing with our 2 and 3 year olds. Soul tending is attending a Godly Play learning event to discover and practice how to tell a Godly Play story or how to welcome and usher children into the Godly Play room as Door Person. Soul tending is cutting wooden figures with a jig-saw for Godly Play in your workshop on a wintry afternoon or evening. Soul-tending is taking some digital photos of our Sunday morning programs to show in the sanctuary.

Every week our bulletin describes many ways for adults to participate in our ministry with children and youth. You can also check out our displays on the bulletin boards on the lower level of the church and our church calendar to discover ways you can get involved and participate in the spiritual nurture of our children. We are all familiar with the proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child". As adults we need to contemplate this responsibility, our role in our spiritual village and how we will live it in ways that bless the children in our midst.

Blessings,
Cindy

THE MISSION & SERVICE FUND AT WORK

How Mission & Service Fund Dollars are Used to Support Ourselves and Others around the World

Locally: In Your Congregation

1. Do you have children or grandchildren in Sunday School? Your M&S gifts provide

funds to develop resources for them.

2. Where was your minister trained? No doubt at a Canadian theological college or training centre supported by the Mission & Service Fund.

3. Has your congregation sought information from Gift Planners, Conference staff, or reference books like the Treasurer's Handbook? These human and print resources are available thanks to the M&S Fund.

4. Has your congregation ever received financial support from the wider church in the form of a Technology Grant, Church Modernization Grant, or Manse Modernization/Improvement Grant?

5. Mandate, Exchange, Women's Concerns magazines, or Spirit Connection?

6. Hospital chaplaincies

7. Campus ministries at universities and colleges

8. Continuing education grants and programs for both ministry personnel and lay members.

Groups & Events

CAROLINE HARCOURT WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Reverend Diane Clark gave an engrossing and moving talk about "The Human Face of Poverty in Guelph" to about 30 women at the February meeting of the Caroline Harcourt Women's Fellowship. Recently retired from the ministry of Chalmers United Church, Guelph, when it disbanded (due to the inevitable attrition of most downtown churches!), Rev. Clark has continued her deep involvement as a volunteer at the

"Chalmers Community Services Centre", 40 Baker Street (and its affiliate at the Three Willows United Church). A high percentage of the people helped by the downtown sites are subsisting on government disability pensioning for mental health problems. Others need help in times of crisis, unemployment, or other illness. The Centre provides a weekly food bank, counselling, and much help in obtaining accommodation and support socially.

Attendees at the meeting donated cartons of non-perishable foods for the Food Shelf. (Harcourt's "Gathering Place", ie the Narthex, always has a box open for food donations to this food resource.)

The March 9 C.H.W.F. meeting will feature one of our new ministers, the Reverend Elizabeth Eberhard-Moffat, talking on her experiences in "Pilgrimages ... and Beyond". All women very welcome – meet in the Friendship Room before noon, with your sandwich.

IN HARMONY FOR HOSPICE CONCERT

Guelph Youth Singers, First Baptist Girls' Choir of Truro and Hospice Wellington's Joybringers present a benefit concert for Hospice Wellington's Children and Youth Programs. The concert will be held on Saturday, March 7, 7:00pm at New Life Church (400 Victoria Rd. N. , Guelph). Tickets are available at Guelph Youth Singers office in the Guelph Youth Music Centre (519-821-8574), New Life Church (519-823-5851) and Hospice Wellington

(836-3921). Tickets are \$15/person and \$40/family. Be part of the harmony!

SONGFEST 2009

The sounds of music will fill the halls of Harcourt Church on Saturday, March 7. Joining the Guelph Chamber Choir in "Songfest 2009" are the choirs from Harcourt Memorial United Church, Dublin Street United Church, the University of Guelph, and the Rainbow Chorus.

This year, Brainerd Blyden-Taylor, artistic director of the Nathaniel Dett Chorale of Toronto, is to lead a workshop with the choirs during the day on Saturday, which will include a talk on Afro American music followed by rehearsals for the choirs individually and as a massed choir.

As an added feature, Guelph drummers Fule and Adwoa Badoe will offer a drumming and dance workshop and will participate in the evening concert.

Come to Harcourt Memorial Church on Saturday night to hear the music that these choirs have spent the whole day refining with this excellent musician. The concert will be presented at 8pm. All tickets are \$10 (general admission) and \$5 eyeGO and may be obtained by phone (510-763-3000), online at www.riverrun.ca or from participating choir members.

MARGARET ROSE UCW

We celebrated Valentine's Day with song, poems, and cake decoration and enjoyed the fellowship.

The second Wednesday in March, Sandy Middleton will speak about birds (the feathered kind). All ladies are invited, 1:30 p.m. in the Friendship Room.

FUNDRAISING SALE

Chalmers Community Services Centre will be holding a fundraising sale at Harcourt Memorial United Church, 87 Dean Ave., on Saturday, March 14 from 9am until 1pm. Quality household items, books, collectibles, and small furniture will be available. Money raised will support our two local pantries, Chalmers Downtown and Chalmers West. Thank you for your support in this ministry.

UKRAINIAN EGG WRITING

Easter is coming! The Caroline Harcourt Women's Fellowship is again hosting Ukrainian Egg writing for ages 12 and up, on Saturday March 21 at 1:30 pm. and Friday March 27th at 7:00 pm. Cost is \$10.00. All proceeds will go to Harcourt's Lenten Appeal: Project Uganda. Sign up sheet is at the Lucy Booth or call Mary Peleschak at 519-822-3552.

AUDIENCE NEEDED

Susan Cullis and Don Macaulay invite everyone to a free piano recital by Duncan Macaulay, from 12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m., on Sunday, March 22, in the sanctuary. (Light snacks will be offered along with tea, coffee and juice, following the 10:30 a.m. service.) This concert is in preparation for Duncan's fourth year graduation recital from the performance piano program at Wilfrid Laurier University. It will feature works by Beethoven, Rodgers and Hammerstein, and

Grieg, plus a Radiohead transcription by Christopher O'Riley. With something for everyone, please join us for a delightful hour of music!

GLEN MILLER CONCERT 2009

A Tribute to Glenn Miller Concert will be produced this year by our own Guelph Wellington Chapter of Stroke Recovery Canada as a fundraiser to support their Peer Support Group and the new Stroke Survivor Visiting Programs at our Guelph hospitals.

In 2007 they brought you the Gospel Jazz Group to a sold out audience at Harcourt. Your assessment – “Most fun I’ve had in years !!!”

Last year they produced the Benny Goodman Tribute Concert to another full house at War Memorial Hall. Your assessment – “Give us more of the same!!!”

And so, on Saturday, May 16, 2009 at War Memorial Hall they are presenting the Glenn Miller Tribute Concert with a very professional 17 piece orchestra including a boy and girl singer which, of course, was standard in those days.

Last year the concert was sold out a month in advance so don't be disappointed. Get your tickets now. Reserved seating, first come, first served.

Tickets can be purchased from Joanne in the Harcourt office 519-824-4177 or from Don Milley 519-822-0744 or Jim McKinnon 519-821-3541. They are \$ 30. each or there

are a limited number of dinner/concert packages, at the Cutten Club, available for \$ 65. each.

For more information – Email glennmillerconcert@sympatico.ca

Opportunities to Serve

DONATIONS TO CHALMERS COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTRE (AND OTHER CHARITIES)

In the past year, a number of people have made donations to Harcourt designating them for the Chalmers Community Services Centre (variously also known as the Fair Share Food Shelf, Friday Food Shelf, Chalmers Food Shelf, Chalmers Community Outreach Centre, Chalmers Downtown, Chalmers West, etc.). However, this is not a Harcourt project and in fact is an entirely separate organization. Hence, Harcourt cannot provide tax receipts for such donations. To get around this problem in the past year, the Treasurer has written letters and sent cheques to Chalmers Community Services Centre with the name and address of the donor so they can be receipted by Chalmers Community Services Centre. But this is a great deal of extra and unnecessary work for the Treasurer and creates significant delays in getting the donation to its intended recipient. Hence, the Finance committee has taken the position that in the future any donations made to Harcourt and designated for the Chalmers Community Services Centre will

be forwarded at the end of the year (or at other intervals) but the donor will not receive a tax receipt for donations so designated. We strongly encourage members of Harcourt who wish to support the Chalmers Community Services Centre to send their donation directly. This will ensure that you do get a tax receipt for the donation and that it gets to where it is needed without delay. The address is: Chalmers Community Services Centre, 40 Baker Street, Guelph, Ontario, N1H 4G1 (519-822-8778).

The same principle applies to any other charity you wish to support. Harcourt cannot act as a clearinghouse for donations directed to other organizations. When you wish to contribute to other charitable organizations, please send your donations directly to them.

Steve Scadding,
Past Chair, Finance Committee

ANNUAL HARCOURT GARAGE SALE

The days are getting longer and people are planning their March Break trips so that means it is time to start thinking about the Harcourt Garage Sale. We have booked the gym for Saturday, April 18, so start gathering your extra treasures. Please, no car tires, clothing or computer parts – they are too difficult to sell.

If you would like to volunteer or have any other questions, please call Frank and Janet Webster at 519-821-0953, or email: fwebst0953@rogers.com

Proceeds always go towards Church projects.

With Heartfelt Thanks

OUR PRAYER SHAWL

A recent issue of the Herald described the Ministry of the Prayer Shawl group and that article motivated me to share what our shawl meant to us.

It arrived as part of a “Care Package” delivered by the Sears the evening before Sue’s surgery last October. A cozy, soft, warmly-coloured piece of knitting, it was wrapped around my shoulders as we left Guelph at 4:30am to travel to Mt. Sinai. None of us spoke much, but the tag on the shawl said “Our prayer for you is Healing and feeling the Spirit’s presence in your lives”, and I found several lines running through my thoughts.

One line was “He will hold you in the palm of His Hand.” The other was the meditation we heard at Harcourt a few years ago:

Be still and know that I am God

Be still and know that I am

Be still and know

Be still

Be

As we made our way through the process of admitting, then travelling to the door of the OR and waiting in the lounge for word from the surgical team, the shawl was either around shoulders or in a lap. Sue was in surgery for more than six hours and we truly were aware of the congregation’s prayers for us during that long, long day.

As I write this, Sue is continuing physio and the shawl is never far away.

Thank you for this ministry as a tangible way of reminding people of Harcourt's caring support.

Janet Webster

Library Lines

Some thought-provoking Lenten and Easter reading- from the church library!
Look for them on display.

J Wildsmith Brian
The Easter Story

P Amery Heather
The Easter Story

242.3 Sargent James E.
From the Edge of the Crowd

242.34 Godfrey Lynn
How Then Shall I Live?

222 Herriot Trevor
Jacob's Wound

232 Lucado Max
The Final Week of Jesus

242.34 Winter David
What's In A Word

242.34 Macdonald Ian
Living Waters

232.9 Rhodes Tricia M.
Contemplating the Cross

232.9 Lucado Max
And the Angels Were Silent

242.34 Holtz Albert
Pilgrim Road

242.34 Borg Marcus J.
The Last Week

261.8 Martin Betty (ed)
Being in Community

242.3 Kalas J.Ellsworth
Easter From the Back Side

Passages

Deaths:

January 28, 2009: Wilda Root

Feb. 4, 2009: Monalene Ganesh, loving mother of Dan

Recipe

Passages