

# THE HARCOURT HERALD

SEPTEMBER 2016

RELIGION  
IN  
POLITICS:  
*LOOKING  
SOUTH*

*Welcome Back!*

**MAKING A  
MARK!  
CHRISTIAN  
TATTOOS**

# Harcourt Memorial United Church

*An Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Canada*

We are a people of God called together and sent forth by Christ to

*Seek / Connect / Act*

## **Our Mission:**

Inspired by the Spirit, we participate in Christian practices that strengthen us in the building of just, compassionate, and non-violent relationships

## **Our Vision Statement:**

To be an authentic community of spiritual growth and service

## **Our Core Values:**

Risk...Respect...Responsibility...Vulnerability...Trust

## **Our Purpose:**

To welcome and strengthen in community all who wish to serve God and follow the way of Jesus

## **Harcourt Memorial United Church**

87 Dean Avenue, Guelph, Ontario N1G 1L3

### **Office Hours:**

Monday to Friday, 9am-noon; 1pm-4pm

Phone: 519-824-4177

Fax: 519-824-9448

Email: office@harcourtuc.ca

Web: www.harcourtuc.ca

**Ministers:** The People with  
Reverend Wendy Brown (ext. 222)  
wendy@harcourtuc.ca  
Reverend Jim Ball (ext. 223)  
revjmball@rogers.com

### **Director of Music Ministry:**

Alison MacNeil (ext. 225)  
alisonmac@rogers.com

### **Church Administrator:**

Anne Purkis

### **Technical and Office Support:**

Nick Swan

### **Custodian:** Darko Cikovic

\*\*Cover photo by fletcherjcm (Paper Matryoshka Dolls) [CC BY-SA 2.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0>)], via Wikimedia Commons

## **Harcourt Herald**

*Published 10 times each year  
by the  
Communications Committee*

## **Your contributions are welcome!**

**Deadline: 20<sup>th</sup> of each month**

**Sept-June**

Editor: Gillian Joseph  
[herald@harcourtuc.ca](mailto:herald@harcourtuc.ca)  
Printer: Anne Purkis



## THE MINISTERS' QUILL

In the first few books of scripture we encounter a family portrait. We all know the kind. It is the type of photograph in which everyone is freshly groomed, and neatly, if not formally dressed. In it, everyone is smiling and looking happy. Everyone is grouped together close, giving the impression that everyone likes each other and gets along well with each other, and suggesting too that the whole group is a cohesive unit in which everyone has a strong sense of family identity and an equally deep and inescapable sense of belonging. I'm talking about that picture. The first few books of scripture also contain photographs of the ancestors who came before that family portrait. And they also contain hints about the photos of the people who will one day come after it. When we read the pages of these books, it is like seeing all of those pictures carefully and chronologically arranged on a wall of a family home. We can picture it, can't we? We can picture the image, or set of images, neatly assembled, that suggest the existence of a single group, family, community - a single clutch of people - that is united and acts together through time with the consistency and predictability of a synchronized swim team. The central biblical photograph includes everyone from Abram to Joshua. The photograph narrates the story of the founding of the people of Israel. It invites us to believe that Israel is a mostly unified and continuous entity through time, consisting of people bound by common blood and common identity, people rooted in a common faith and a common practice.



This tableau is how the leaders responsible for the religious life of the people want the story to be presented. They assemble the pictures on the wall, and arrange the people in the pictures, in a way that makes it clear that everyone is together. That everyone is getting along. Mostly. That everyone is saying 'cheese' at the same time and in the same way. And that everyone is bound by a common purpose and by a common identity. Oh, to be sure, there are subdivisions and disagreements and differences in practice among family members. But the picture is doctored in a way so that these tensions and separations are minimized. What the leaders intend, what they want to do, is to strengthen the people they serve and the people who will follow them. They seek to achieve this goal by giving their people a sense that they belong to a group that has always been together and held together, that has faced and bettered the worst that has come its way, and that has practiced the faith in a manner that has served them well down the ages and has gotten them this far. Such an identity and tradition, they believe, ought never to be abandoned. Rather, it should be trusted and extended. Such a portrait suggests permanence and strength. It advocates an "if it's not broke, don't fix it" attitude. The biblical photograph serves as an anchor in times of storm. It serves as ballast in journeys that contend with strong wind. Everybody relax, this tableau says. Everybody breathe. We've seen worse. We've experienced worse. We've overcome worse. And this

is how we've done it, generation after generation. This is how we have gotten through: by staying together, by remaining united, by keeping faith with what has always been. God is with us.



"Early Painting" by  
Gordon Peteran  
Used with Permission  
of the Artist

Such is the message that the biblical photograph, and collection of photographs, wants us never to forget and always to trust: that we are one. Always have been. Always will be. Much like the Peteran installation in the photo on the left, in which everything is painted red, the message is clear. "We are all one." Which, as convictions go, has much to commend it. The religious writers are correct. There is a certain sense of stability that comes through this idea, a certain confidence, and strength, and trust and comfort. Depending on the particular character of these qualities, and of their consequences, the "unity" theme may be very good for the people.

But having said that, there still exists a qualification. And the qualification is this: the usefulness of a conviction does not, in itself, make it true. The conviction that Israel is one remains a conviction. It is a tool, not a truth. And this distinction is not unimportant.

For there is another biblical view. In the book of Judges, the unified picture of Israel found in earlier books, fades. The carefully crafted view of the community, with a blessed past and a common identity and continuous tradition, retreats. In its place, a description of life as it is being experienced by ordinary people begins to emerge. What gets reported comes raw and unfiltered. The picture of life it narrates does not look photo shopped. The Israel described does not look as "together" as the one scholarly writers in the back room would have us imagine. Nor is the world they encounter so obviously filled with the actions of the rescuing God of Israel's past. God may still be with the people, but deliverance is not brought about by dramatic examples of divine intervention. Rather, deliverance is wrought through the actions, often messy and violent, of ordinary men and women.

The difference in perspective and emphasis in Judges, from what went before it in Genesis through Joshua, could not be more dramatic. It is like watching two different reports about a war. The first is the version we are presented on the nightly news, the report that comes complete with maps and photographs and analysis by people located far from the frontline. The second is the version of the war that is presented by the soldiers themselves and by the journalists who are embedded with the troops at the frontline. The war that in the news studio looks neat and organized and rolling out according to plan looks very different to those involved in the experiences in the field. The Israel we encounter in Judges is not unified. It is actually made up of many little and

disparate and not always coordinated groups, groups that sometimes work together and at other times work at cross-purposes. It consists of groups that do not always hold to, or are motivated by, the same set of goals or values or tactics. Neither at a given time nor across time. For the people on the ground Israel is, was, and in some ways will always be, many Israels - a sometimes well and other times poorly stitched together clutch of clans and tribes, with differing interests and concerns based on the concrete realities of their specific contexts and challenges. These diverse groups, which loosely constituted a single group, had dignity and value. Each and every one of them.

Now the thing is, the thing that is important to remember, is that this sense of separateness within Israel, this portrait of significant difference and sometimes division, of significant struggle and sometimes growth, is also a tool. Not a truth. And depending on the ways in which it is seen and applied, it too can contribute to the health and vibrancy of a developing, evolving community. The idea that Israel was many - that it had always been so and probably always would be - serves. Diversity is not the enemy of community. It is essential to its identity and existence.

The gift of our religious literature is that it did not adjudicate between these two views and tools. Rather the ancestors chose to pass both ideas and portraits on. They gifted them to us, hoping that we might sit with them awhile and learn from them, as we wrestle in our time with questions of identity, purpose and ways of being.

In the midst of our own reflections about who we've been, who we are and who we will be, we remember the gift of these two perspectives. Both of which are right. Both of which are wrong. Both of which can serve.

There has always been a single Harcourt.  
There has never been a single Harcourt.  
By appreciating and questioning both perspectives  
we shall be strengthened  
on our way.

Blessings! Jim

# WORSHIP SCHEDULE

## ***Summer Schedule***

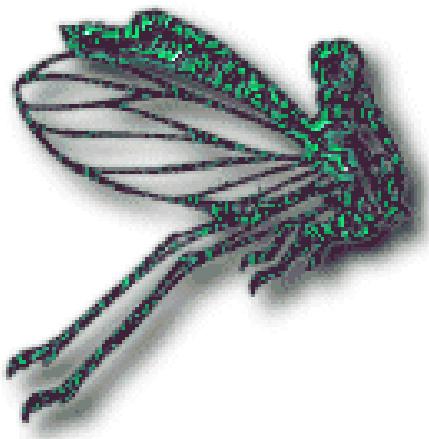
**September 4** 1st Sunday in Creation – Ocean Sunday (Two services only)  
10 a.m. in the sanctuary AND  
10 a.m. in the Friendship Room (MANNA)

## ***Normal Schedule (we return to three services – 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.)***

**September 11** 2nd Sunday in Creation – Flora Sunday

**September 18** 3rd Sunday in Creation – Storm Sunday

**September 25** 4th Sunday in Creation - Blessings of the Animals (Two services only)  
9 a.m. in the chapel and  
10:30 am (**All ages service in the sanctuary**)



## **WITH FAITH AND HOPE**

by Lorraine Holding, Chair of Council

Where is the Spirit leading us as the Harcourt congregation and community? That was the question to end my June Council News article. Now, I focus on it again as we enter September and a busy fall of discussion, discernment and decision-making.

We are thrilled that over 100 people participated in the ten June conversation groups. Sincere thanks go to the hosts in their homes, the facilitators, note-takers, and Bill Lord and Peter Jackson who developed the format, discussion questions and printed materials. Our goal was to bring Harcourt people together to appreciate the diversity of Harcourt's life and ministry. The Collage created illustrates the many parts of our body, through which we carry out the numerous ways we connect with each other and our ministry. We listened to each other and discovered three overlapping understandings of our shared future (see the summary elsewhere in this newsletter).



Two copies of the IMNA Survey (Identity, Mission, Needs Analysis) Results are available in the Harcourt Library. The 110 slides show many graphs that reflect our on-line responses to the survey. Watch for electronic access to the slides through Dropbox.

Now, we move forward on our Harcourt 20/20 timeline from listening to discernment and decisions about our future. The Steering Team urges you to participate in these opportunities to learn and discuss what model of church will best lead us into a healthy future. This is your opportunity to provide input!

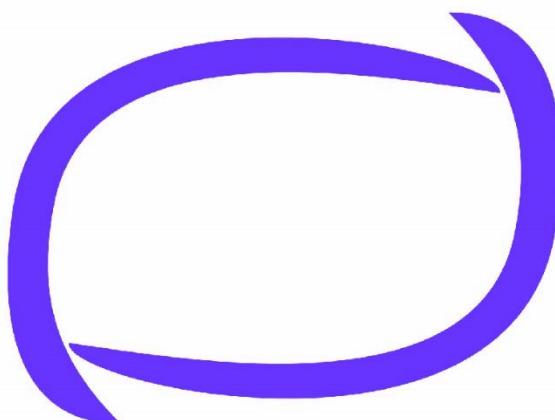
- A chat with Bill and Peter to focus on the summary of the June conversation groups on Sunday, September 11, after the 9 and 10:30am services in the Chapel.
- A workshop to focus on the IMNA Survey results, facilitated by Bev Robinson (who worked with us in 2013) on Saturday, September 24, 9am-noon in the gym. Child care will be provided. Watch for pre-registration news.

- A workshop to ‘officially’ begin our Congregational Joint Needs Assessment, facilitated by Rev. Paul Miller, Waterloo Presbytery Support Minister. Two Presbytery members will work with us on Saturday, October 22, 9am-noon in the gym. Child care will be provided. Watch for pre-registration news.
- A Congregational Meeting to receive the Writing Team and Council’s report and recommendations from the October 22<sup>nd</sup> workshop. Anticipated date is Sunday, November 27 following the 10:30am services. More details will come later.

Are you wondering about the previously used JNAC approach? Waterloo Presbytery now uses the Saturday workshop and follow-up Congregational Meeting to involve more people across the Congregation. Specific staffing needs will arise through this process. In between the two events, a small Writing Team prepares a report that pulls together the information for six Harcourt profiles: Community; Pastoral Charge; Ministry; Skills; Resources; and Terms for any staff vacancies identified. Council must approve the report before it is presented to the November Congregational Meeting.

During the next two months, you will see and hear more information to help us learn and move toward our decisions. Look at our Harcourt 20/20 timeline to tie the pieces together. Talk with others. The Congregational Retreat, September 16-18, will include personal reflection time. Possible staffing models lived by other churches will be shared. Harcourt leaders (Council, Staff Team, Committees/Teams) will reflect on our future. There is much to consider.

Again, I close with the invitation for you to take an active role in our decision-making. Where is the Spirit leading us as the Harcourt congregation and community?



**New to Harcourt? Welcome!  
You may want to know that there are three  
Sunday services:**

### ***Chapel service (9 am)***

The Chapel service features prayers, readings, singing, and a message. It is quiet and meditative. There is no choir or special children's program. Tea and coffee are served following the service, and some participants gather for additional guided reflection.

### ***Sanctuary service (10:30 am)***

The Sanctuary service closely follows the Chapel service, but also includes children's time, the Harcourt choir with piano and guitar accompaniment, and occasionally the handbell choir and flutes. **Nursery support is provided in the nursery from 10 a.m. until 12 noon.** Tea and coffee are served in the gym after the service.

### ***MANNA (10:30 am)***

Is a new, friendly, all-ages, interactive, alternative worship experience that involves hands-on activities and sharing. It takes place in the Friendship Room, also at 10:30 a.m.

### ***Special schedules***

**Summer schedule:** Summer services begin the last Sunday in June and continue through to include the first Sunday in September. Nursery care is available.

**Special events:** There are also some special Sundays during the year, such as Easter Sunday, when the 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services are held together at 10 a.m.

**Midweek services:** There are other times and opportunities to come together in worship at Harcourt. These events take place seasonally. Visit our webpage at [www.harcourtuc.ca](http://www.harcourtuc.ca) or call the Church office at 519-824-4177



# People are Talking About...



- **“Seusscharist” Blends Silliness with the Sacred**

What is a Seusscharist? It's a celebration of the Eucharist using language inspired by Dr. Seuss for the purpose of making the Eucharist friendlier to children and families. The idea for the Seusscharist was developed by the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh and it is catching on (no kidding!).

<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/arts-and-life/life/faith/ready-for-he-hears-a-who-390778231.html>

- **United Church Minister Rev. Jim MacDonald in Moncton leads the Pride Parade**

When Rev. Jim MacDonald was asked to lead this year's Pride parade in Moncton recently, he didn't hesitate to accept the invitation.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/moncton-pride-parade-marshall-minister-1.3727619>

- **Christians Call for Boycott of Franklin Graham**

Some Christians in Canada are protesting the arrival of US evangelist Franklin Graham to their city. A number of Protestants and Roman Catholics in Metro Vancouver are against the three-day Festival of Hope that will take place in March 2017. Franklin Graham is the son of 97-year-old retired televangelist Billy Graham. The letter, signed by a number of church leaders, objected to what they call the "incendiary and intolerant" attitude Franklin Graham portrays.

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/World/Canadian-Christians-boycott-Franklin-Graham>

- **United Church Marks 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Apology to Indigenous Peoples**

The Right Rev. Jordan Cantwell, and representatives of the indigenous church and Sudbury Presbytery, participated in a commemorative service at the site of the 1986 Apology in Sudbury. <http://www.thesudburystar.com/2016/08/17/sudbury-ceremony-to-remember-apology>

# MAKING A MARK: CHRISTIAN TATTOOS

Christian tattoos are becoming an increasingly popular way of displaying faith and spirituality in a public way among celebrities these days. A tattoo is a design that is permanently etched into the skin with needles and ink. The word "tattoo" comes from a Tahitian word, "tatua," which means "to mark." Adding decorative illustrations to skin has been a popular practice in all cultures since ancient times. In fact the Egyptians used tattoos as early as 4000 B.C. However, they have only recently gained social acceptance in Canada and the United States. The most popular modern Christian tattoo is the Latin cross.

Although one might think that tattoos are only a fashion statement, it may be interesting to note that they are also used by people for medical and non-medical cosmetic conditions such as for obscuring large birthmarks, to improve the skin color of patients with a skin disorder called vitiligo, or to create permanent makeup such as eye liner or blush for burned or disfigured victims. Here are some examples of Christian tatoos.



Canadian Justin Bieber has a number of Christian tattoos. He states that his tattoos represent his faith in Jesus and his journey with finding purpose in God. He has a Jesus tattoo on his calf and angel wings on the back of his neck. Most recently, he obtained a tiny tattoo of a black cross beside his left eye.

Popular British soccer star, David Beckham uses his body as a canvas. All of his many tattoos have meaning to him including a quote from proverbs, a picture of Jesus sitting on a cross on his side, an angel on his back and a cross with wings on his neck

Singer Justin Timberlake, the son of a Baptist church choir director and grandson of a minister, has a large cross tattoo on his shoulder and a very large image of a cherubic angel on his back.

Singer Katy Perry is also the daughter of Christian pastors and she has the word 'Jesus' tattooed on her wrist. Another female celebrity, actress Drew Barrymore, has a Gothic cross entwined with a rose vine on her right leg.

If you're thinking about getting a tattoo make sure to check out the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Site that explains what you should be aware of before getting one. The site even provides information on some tattoo parlours that have been inspected for your safety. <https://www.wdgpublichealth.ca/?q=bodyart>

## COMMITTEE & GROUP CATCH-UP

### Generous Gift Helps Move Plans Forward For Accessible Sanctuary-Level Washrooms

by Dave Hume, Chair of the Washroom Building Committee

The plans for the new washrooms were submitted to City Hall on August 12th as part of the application for a Building Permit. When the Building Permit is obtained, then the architect will send out a Call for Tenders. Thanks to the Building Committee members for going over the plans in great detail.

After the Congregational Meeting in June to approve this project, a couple came forward and said they would cover the remaining cost of the washrooms! Heartfelt thanks!

### “Adopt-a-Bulletin” Program Still Underway!

by Gay Slinger, Chair, Worship

The Worship Committee continues to offer an opportunity to all in our congregation and to the community at large to dedicate a Sunday bulletin to share the joys and sorrows in our lives. Maybe you noticed we've already had many dedications to celebrate special birthdays and anniversaries, to say farewell as people move away to new adventures, and to lovingly remember those who have passed. A wonderful way to share these moments with others in the Harcourt family.



All that is required is a minimum donation of \$50 to the Church for which a tax receipt will be issued. If you wish to participate, please contact the Church Office at least one week in advance to request a date for dedication and make your donation. Reserve your week early to avoid disappointment! You can then either drop your donation off at the office or include it in that week's regular offering, clearly indicating that you are making a donation to the "Adopt-a-Bulletin" program. A brief dedication note will then appear in that week's bulletin.

Please do note that space in the bulletins is **very** limited and so the dedication note must, by necessity, be very brief. It will read, "This Bulletin has been sponsored by \_\_\_\_\_ in celebration/memory/acknowledgement of \_\_\_\_\_. We want to honour the dedication respectfully by placing it in the actual Bulletin and not in the announcement pages but, by doing so, must limit what is printed.

And remember, all monies received will go directly to our church's operating funds to assist in meeting our various expenses – always a good thing!

On behalf of the Worship Committee, we hope you'll consider "Adopting a Bulletin" as a great way to remember that special person or event in your lives and help our congregation's finances at the same time. We look forward to hearing from you and Thanks"!

## **Changes in the Gym Could Be Baffling!**

by Dave Hume, Chair, Property Committee

Last year, Joan Barham took the initiative to apply for a Federal Grant to make some changes to the gym so that it would be better for meetings. The application went to the New Horizons for Seniors Program and was supported in the amount of \$25,000. Joan and Mark Sears and I have been working with Scott Reid of Mountain Audio on the first phase of this project. That phase involved the hanging of baffles from the girders in the ceiling of the gym and lowering the lights and ceiling fans. That part is now complete and has resulted in a significant reduction in the echoes in the gym. We are now working on the next phases, which, depending on costs, involve sound insulation in the kitchen pass-throughs, and installing a large screen for projecting images in the gym.

## **Put Some Zing in Your Life: Make a Contribution and Some Have Fun**

by Gay Slinger, Chair, Worship

Are you finding yourself with some extra time on your hands and wondering just what to do with yourself? Are you looking for new adventures, new experiences, new fulfilling ways to use some of that time? Oh, and have fun too?? And, while we're talking, isn't September the perfect time to take a fresh look at what is happening around us in all aspects of our life and to contemplate how we might want to try to do new things, learn new things, make new contributions, meet new people and generally just do – NEW! Well, your friendly Harcourt Worship Committee is offering an opportunity to do all that and more!

Your Worship Committee is a very dedicated, active little (just three of us!) group who is seeking NEW members or helpers who are seeking NEW ways to share their talents, time, interests and perspectives in making our worship experience at Harcourt happen! We'd love to have NEW voices at our meetings in which we talk among ourselves and with our terrific staff about the needs for upcoming services are determined, actions are assigned, existing teams of helpers supported, lively discussions held about bigger and broader dreams, questions and concerns raised about how our worship experiences are working and what might make them even better. Sounds daunting, right? But it's not – always lots of laughter and no prior theological training required! We all learn new things as we go and discussions can be lively! For the last year, we've experimented by "meeting" by email as needed to allow members to get away for the winter and still remain involved. Hey, how "NEW age" is that??

But if committee meetings are just not "your thing", even by email, no problem! We'd love to have NEW hands to help with some of the various tasks that Worship oversees. Would you be interested in ushering from time to time? Coming early to help fold bulletins? Being part of a NEW "Candle Team" to keep us "lit up" by making sure we have all the needed candles on hand and ready to go for regular Sunday services plus Advent and Lent and All Saints Sunday and Christmas Eve services? Being part of our wonderful "Chancel Team" to help with the seasonal décor of our sanctuary and chapel? Joining our fabulous Congregational Worship Team to help plan, write and present liturgical parts of our Sunday worship on those Sundays that such assistance is needed? And, of course, there are all the many musical opportunities that our fabulous Musical Director, Alison MacNeill, provides! These are just a few of the exciting and fulfilling opportunities that await you!

So if we've spurred your interest in joining our committee or helping in one of the many varied ways noted (some NEWer than others!), please contact Gay Slinger at [slingerfam@rogers.com](mailto:slingerfam@rogers.com) for more information. We'll put you in touch with any existing

teams or, as with our hope for a NEW “Candle Team”, provide full instructions on what is needed and when, what supplies we have and where they’re kept! All good and none of it difficult!

We all know that “Many hands make light work” and just how true that is. Well, Worship is hoping that there are many NEW hands out there just itching for a chance to get involved in the worship experience at Harcourt in NEW but ever so meaningful and important ways! We look forward to hearing from you!

**A Little Humour!** Joe was opening a new business, and one of his friends decided to send flowers for the occasion. The flowers arrived and Joe read the card. It said, "Rest in Peace." Joe, enraged, called the florist to complain. The florist replied, "Sir, I'm really sorry for the mistake, but rather than getting angry, you should imagine this: somewhere there is a funeral taking place today, and they have flowers with a note saying, "Congratulations on your new location."

## The Way Of The Wind

by Peter Jackson, Mindstretch

Each week, the Mindstretch group gathers to offer personal responses to questions identified in advance by one of its members. The questions usually arise from reading part of a book we have selected to prompt our thinking.

This September we begin a new season, rooting our questions in Bruce Sanguin's book *The Way Of The Wind: The Path And Practice Of Evolutionary Christian Mysticism*. The book is amazing and also challenging. The intellectual challenges form the ‘path’ to an even more profound challenge later on in the book: to adopt personal mystical practices (direct experiences of God) that accord with evolutionary Christianity.

For the September 15 meeting, the questions will arise from chapter 1 of the book. Titled “Evolution”, the chapter is only ten pages long, but packed with close-knit argument. Here are the questions we will address.

### Question 1: Your Image Of God

Sanguin writes that over the years his theology has simplified: “*In a nutshell, we are being transformed by and for love.*” He imagines the evolutionary process as a

*"divine strategy for birthing and growing a world ... God so completely pours Godself into the world that when humans think and act in freedom for love and as love, they are acting on behalf of God".*

Sanguin goes further, arguing that God acts in the world *only* as love: "*If there is a God who could have stopped the holocaust and chose not to, I'm not interested. But if God exercises power only as love, not as domination, then God is not free to intervene episodically to change the course of history.*" Further, "*the 'making' of the world need not be thought of as being performed by a Being separate from the world ... the world and God are entangled in a complementary relationship*".

The question: Does Sanguin's description resonate with your own image of God? Can you think of an instance in your own life where God has acted through the power of love? Alternatively, can you think of an instance where God intervened in a different way to change the course of your personal history?

## Question 2: Your Understanding Of Evolution

Typically, says Sanguin, the word evolution brings to mind Darwin, dinosaurs and DNA. Most theories from the physical sciences assume a materialistic worldview "*that is, that the world is constituted exclusively of matter and that the 'higher' forms of life such as mind, spirit and soul are epiphenomena*" - meaning that they were created by 'matter', not by God.

But, says Sanguin, philosophical materialism is an ideological choice, not a scientific conclusion derived from facts. Evolution is not only about physics. Evolution also occurs in the realms of consciousness, culture (values, beliefs, relationships) and spirit. Perhaps evolutionary drivers themselves evolve over time, and now have less to do with blind chance and more to do with freedom of conscious choice, including the choice to love.

The question: As you think of the 13.8 billion-year history of the universe, does it seem plausible that evolutionary drivers have themselves evolved? Does the choice to love seem to be an evolutionary driver in human history, including your own?

## Question 3: How we know what we know

The scientific method, which tends to privilege parts over the whole, is only one way of knowing the world, says Sanguin. The mystic path involves empathically knowing, uniting with what is known and thereby awakening to oneness with Reality.

The question: In your spiritual journey, have you experienced 'empathically knowing'?

Phew! That's just chapter one. There are ten more chapters of equally provoking ideas. *The Way Of The Wind* is available from Amazon and other booksellers. It is well worth reading.

Mindstretch meets **in the chapel from 8:45 to 10:00 AM on Thursday mornings**. You are welcome to participate, whether you are a regular participant, a lapsed participant or a newcomer. Once you are on the Mindstretch list, you will receive questions by email every week. Come along and try us out on September 15 or a Thursday following.

Ref: Sanguin, B. (2015). *The Way Of The Wind: The Path And Practice Of Evolutionary Christian Mysticism*. Viriditas Press.

## We Want To Hear From You! Communicating Better – What is Missing, What Needs to Change?

by Joan Barham, Chair, Communication

As requested by Council, Communication invites you to give us your thoughts with respect to “what is missing” or “what you wish to see changed” with respect to hard copy or digital communication materials at Harcourt. We wish to develop our “Harcourt Look” along with these changes.

For example, what do we give to people, who are interested in Harcourt, to take away in hard copy from Harcourt or to send to them digitally? Do we need to revise the materials that are in the church pews? How might we use our logo better? Do we need video, live feed, changes to the website?

If you give us your wishes for change or new communication messaging and making better use of our logo and colours (green, red, orange), Communication will develop a plan for the changes to present to Council, by consulting with those whom the changes will affect. We want to hear from you!! Please send to Communication through: [jfhbarham@gmail.com](mailto:jfhbarham@gmail.com)

**JOIN US AT HARCOURT  
FOR THE  
*Blessing of the Animals*  
SERVICE**

**SEPTEMBER 25<sup>TH</sup> AT 10:30 AM**



## **Cheese and Hackers (Oh My!)**

by Ben Fear for the Property Committee

The Edna Boyce Garden received a beauty treatment at the Whine and Weed event held in the garden of Harcourt Memorial United Church in July. A record number of weeders turned out for the event lured by some of Sarah Lowe's smoked gouda which after two hours of clipping, shoveling, weeding and dead-heading proved to be



psychotomimetic. The Property Committee express their warm thanks to the members, friends and neighbours for their hot work. They especially commended Ms. Lowe for her hospitality and selection of cheese. We suggest the next work project might be entitled "Cheese and Hackers" and perhaps we could sell tickets. Watch for the date of a repeat opportunity coming soon to a garden we care about. While words of appreciation are being doled out, how about a big hand for the committee members who handled the care-taking tasks over the summer including pre

and post event preparation and sanitation tasks, duties that are not in their job description and did the somewhat spooky nightly security check as well.

While the property committee was going about their business, they couldn't help noticing the Chalmers Community Gardens were also being tended and watered by their friends who were doing their share to fill the compost pile and empty the rain barrels. (O.K., so there was no rain in the barrels). They also serve who only come and look.

## **Harcourt Men's Group To Hear About Syrian Refugees**

by Ross McKenzie

Our next meeting is Wednesday, September 14<sup>th</sup>. Murray Woods will be leading this meeting. Jim Estill will speak on "Do the right thing". Jim plans to talk about all aspects of his involvement with the Syrian refugees, including numbers of people that have arrived, his personal support, what still needs to be done, his most touching and toughest moments so far, unexpected needs that are evident, how the city's community hospitality measures up, how the religious communities measure up, and how the school system has responded to the ESL needs. All men are welcome to attend and we invite you to bring a friend or a neighbour who would enjoy this meeting. Coffee will be ready at 7:45 a.m., the meeting will begin at 8:00 a.m.

# An Exciting Opportunity for Leading Worship!

by Gay Slinger, Chair Worship Committee

As Albert Einstein once said, “Creativity is contagious, pass it on.” Yes, you’ve heard this before but, it’s just so “right”, that I had to use it again to remind everyone of the truly wonderful opportunity there is at Harcourt to help plan and lead our worship services. The Worship Committee continues to seek all those who are interested in growing and sharing their creative gifts and talents in the expression of their personal faith as part of our Congregational Worship Team – CWTTeam for short. Can’t you just feel those juices already flowing?!

Response to congregational worship leadership during both past sabbatical periods was overwhelmingly favourable as people experienced the richness of the varied contributions made by many within our congregation who shared their personal faith and creativity in assisting with liturgical leadership during our Sunday services. Many of the leaders themselves expressed how meaningful it was for them personally to have the opportunity to learn and grow in their own faith and to share in the planning and fellowship of worship. A win-win for all concerned! And that positivity has continued as members of our CWTTeam have participated regularly as able and needed over the last couple years.

One might wonder, we have two ministers – why can’t they do it all? Well, two things come to mind. Firstly, our congregation very much wants to support the Manna service which wonderfully continues to grow in numbers and enthusiasm with young families and others interested in a different, more interactive way to worship. But it happens each Sunday morning also at 10:30. Jim has continued to play a very active role in supporting the Manna Team in planning and also attending as able when not preaching in the sanctuary, something which Worship very much encourages. As he just cannot be present in two services at once to assist, why can’t we, the congregation, assist Miriam in planning and leading worship especially on those Sundays? We must remember that our Sunday bulletin does name the Congregation among our Ministers! And secondly, and just as importantly if not more so, this is a unique and very special opportunity for each of us at Harcourt to explore our own personal faith and to meaningfully share it in the planning and presentation of our regular Sunday services. Speaking personally and from what I’ve heard from others, the expression of our faith in ways unique to us, from our own lives and perspectives, sometimes raw but always honestly heart-felt, can be a profound spiritual experience for both the Team member and our congregation.

SO ... Worship is continuing to grow our CWTTeam. We’re inviting all who want to flex their creative muscles by writing Calls to Worship or Prayers or Readings or Blessings or whatever may be needed to meaningfully help express the Sunday Message. You can work individually or with a friend or family member. You will work

closely with Jim, Miriam and Alison to help plan the service for a particular Sunday and many great planning and writing resources are readily available. No need to forego your holidays or time away – lots of opportunities available throughout the year. Does one Season of the Church Year have particular meaning for you? If so, choose a Sunday during that Season. No prior experience is required for our Team as you will learn as you go – as we all have! You may feel you wish only to write. You may feel you wish only to read what others have written. You may feel you want to do both! All good! You will not be alone – but no group meetings will be required – unless you want them! See how wonderfully flexible it can be! Just remember what the ever creative Dr. Seuss once wrote: “Think left and think right and think low and think high. Oh, the thinks you can think up if only you try!” And yes, yes, I know – you’ve that from me before too! But if it’s “right”, it’s “right”! Doesn’t always have to be original to be good! Wisdom can be found in many forms ...

If you wish to join our Congregational Worship Team or need more information, please contact Gay Slinger of Worship at [slingerfam@rogers.com](mailto:slingerfam@rogers.com). We look forward to hearing from you!

## Adult Faith Formation at Harcourt – Fall 2016

by Andre Auger, Adult Faith Formation Team

Harcourt maintains its commitment to provide us each season a number of opportunities to grow in our faith. This fall, we have five offerings.

### 1. Senior transitions: Contemplating the next move.

This will be a set of sessions on thinking through living arrangements for those of us about to face transition. The series will start with **a luncheon Sunday Sept 11**, which would be an interactive opportunity to hear more from each other what our concerns and questions are, while presenting on the “importance of home”, and looking at statistics and trends with aging populations and housing. This session will also discuss the importance of being proactive versus reactive.

Subsequent sessions will examine:

1. How to stay put, and what services are available to enable us to stay as long as we can in our beloved homes.
2. The non-institutional options including “smart-sizing”, life leases, the arboretum, rentals, condominiums. Julie will discuss some of the myths as well as pros and

cons of the variety of home choices and speak about projects currently being developed in Guelph.

3. The retirement home and nursing home option – why it isn't like your parents' experience. Julie will present information that will make it easier in the event this becomes your option.
4. A session on stuff! What do I do with all of my stuff!! Julie will present with a professional organizer to help people understand what kind of help is available, when the time comes to downsize. Part of it will look at how to disconnect from our possessions and turn the process into something positive.
5. Making sense of the financial side of residential options: unpacking the expenses, and using the potential equity in your home without a reverse mortgage. She will talk about the Sell 'n Stay program, and we will have a chance to hear from an Estate/Financial Planner and Estate Lawyer.
6. Preparing your home for sale – the entire process: when to begin and how to get the most from your home and potential ways to make the entire move as seamless as possible.

Sessions will take place **every Tuesday morning, from 10:30 to 12 noon**, in the Friendship Room, **starting September 13**. Be sure to mark your calendar.

## **2. What are the Gifts of Years? Aging as a Spiritual Practice! "Let's Talk"**

Have you considered the joys of "Elderhood"? Are you noticing the joys as well as the sorrows and losses? Let's talk about options, perceptions, beliefs and change. Aging is about "CHANGE". Let's start a conversation about aging, living, dying, challenges and gifts. Is it possible to normalize aging and death, and create a new perspective? This is intended as a small group (up to 10) that values sharing and learning in a safe and confidential environment. For further information please contact Marnie, marnieallen47@gmail.com, 519-824-1814 or Stan, stanley.bunston@sympatico.ca, 226-821-3769. Please register (first 10 will be confirmed) with Marnie. 4-6 sessions are planned, to be held on **Thursdays, 10:30 to 12:00 in the Chapel starting October 13**.

### **Co-Facilitators:**

Marnie Allen, Teacher, Workshop and Group Facilitator, Hospice trained volunteer, specializing in Training and Grief and Bereavement. Kripalu trained in Meditation and Program assisting.

Stan Bunston, retired Minister, Harcourt Covenanted Spiritual Companion, Hospice Wellington Grief and Bereavement Facilitator.

### **3. “Draw the Circle Wide” - Loving in a blended family**

Many of us live in extended families where our children have children from different partners. Relationships get strained, fraught with challenges, and you as grandparent may sometimes feel caught in the middle. Earlla Vickers, a retired therapist, will facilitate a small group (maximum 8 participants) where these issues can be explored in safety. She is planning 6 sessions, every two weeks on **Monday evenings 6:30-8:30, starting Sept 14. These sessions will be held in Room 301.**

### **4. Explorations in Progressive Christianity**

A group of us has been meeting most **Saturday mornings from 10:00 to 11:30** to explore our faith through the lens of recent theologians and biblical scholars. Typically we watch a 20-40 minute segment from a DVD, and then have two Rounds of sharing. We have created a safe environment where people can share the doubts, their insights, and their beliefs without fear of being negatively judged. We see ourselves as “pilgrim seekers” and everyone's journey is honoured and respected.

This Fall we will study two new DVDs - Richard Rohr – An Alternative Orthodoxy, and John Dominic Crossan – Divine Violence, or How to Read the Bible and Still be Christian.

The group is open to everyone; all are welcome. We will continue to meet in **Rm 202-203, Saturday mornings beginning Saturday, September 23.** The facilitator is Andre Auger.

### **5. Thanksgiving Meditations**

Please join Joanne Hill, personal and corporate life coach, yoga and meditation teacher for four sessions in October to practice peace and noble silence in four ways; Mindful Movement; silence and stillness; yoga nidra for sleeping; and sacred creativity. This series is designed for deep relaxation, and is sure to nurture and nourish mind, body and soul. To register [jlifevita@gmail.com](mailto:jlifevita@gmail.com) or 519 823-5737. The 4 sessions will take place Wednesdays 7- 9 p.m. starting October 5<sup>th</sup> also in Room 301.



# **Book, Book, Book – No, It's Not a Chicken Calling!**

by Mary-Lou Funston, Library Committee

It's the end of a long, hot, hazy summer, with regret from some and relief for others! It's also the beginning of a new school year – a time for new activities, new experiences, new reflections. So, if you have never taken time – 5 minutes, 1/2 hour (whatever you want) – to meditate, now is a good time to do it.



## **SUGGESTIONS FROM THE LIBRARY**

- ✓ **Spirit of Hope** – A Collection of Prayers and Meditations for Adults and Children  
242 WHI.

This is a small book containing lovely prayers of every kind for all situations. Some are a sentence or two, some a page. The last third of the book contains the prayers for children – delightful!

- ✓ **The Cup of Our Life – A Guide of Spiritual Growth** by Joyce Rupp  
242 RUP

This is one that I have used and found very helpful. The author suggests choosing a favourite cup/mug to use as a focus. Then, each day has a theme with a short reading followed by a daily practice of breathing, reflection and journaling.

- ✓ **Knit One, Purl a Prayer – A Spirituality of Knitting** by Peggy Rosenthal  
242 ROS

This is a meditation guide written specifically for knitters. Each day has a reading with a knitting theme and suggestions for meditation. There are also patterns printed for different kinds of small knitting projects to aid in meditation.

- ✓ **Loaves, Fishes, and Leftovers – Sharing Faith's Deep Questions** by Ted Loder  
230 LOD

This book is not a meditation guide per se, but rather a discussion of questions put to a minister by his congregation. He decided to devote two Sundays in the year to answering questions put to him by his congregation. The questions reveal the members' struggles with their understanding of their faith.

## FOR THE TWEENS AND TEENS

Many young people may be meeting Syrian refugees for the first time this September. For that reason I have chosen to suggest the following books:

- ✓ **The American Muslim Teenager's Handbook** by The American Muslim Teenager's Handbook by Dilara Hafiz, Imran Hafiz and Yasmine Hafiz.

A book that outlines some of the Muslim beliefs and practices.

- ✓ **Caged Eagles** by Eric Walters

Set during WW2 this book tells the story of one Japanese teen and his family who were forced to go into an internment camp in BC. Deals with racism and injustice.

## FOR THE "LITTIES"

Since it is the time of the year for an abundance of fresh produce, I have chosen only one book to recommend to your younger children:

- ✓ **Simply in Season Children's Cookbook - Fun with Food from Garden to Table** by Mark Beach and Julie Kauffman

Lots of delicious-sounding recipes with very clear, easy instructions and great illustrations. There are also snippets of fascinating information included – for example: Did you know that spinach may someday be used to power laptops and cell phones!?

I will put all of the above books out on the shelves so they can be easily seen. Come in and browse!

## Caroline Harcourt Women's Fellowship Circle Considers the Effects of Weather

by Jean Hume

The Caroline Harcourt Fellowship Circle fall meeting will be held in the Friendship Room on **September 12, 2016 at noon**. Gillian Joseph from Clear Pane Research Services will be our guest speaker. Gillian will highlight some of the findings from research that she and her colleagues recently undertook that explores how weather can affect front-line workers and residents in long-term care facilities. Please bring your bag lunch and join us for this very timely subject as the weather this past summer has been a HOT topic. Tea and treats will be served as well as some devotional time and an opportunity to share your summer experiences with friends.

# Our Community

## Our Own Peter Gill Wins a 2016 Guelph Mayor Award! (Taken from the City of Guelph Announcement)

Peter Gill is described as an indispensable part of the Chalmers Community Services Centre, a not-for-profit organization that provides emergency food, clothing and support to people in need in our community.

As Chair of the Board, Peter has developed community partnerships, secured



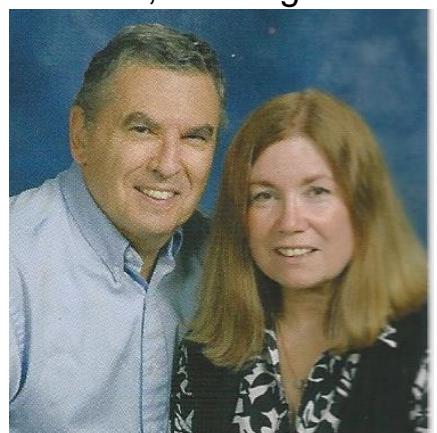
*Daughter Lisa Gill  
accepts the award on  
Peter's behalf*

funding, and served as a champion of the Centre throughout the community. He is also a dedicated volunteer who has assisted guests in the clothing room every Friday morning for the past eight years. He knows most of the guests by name and is always willing to lend a listening ear to those who wish to share their stories. In the words of his nominator, "On a Friday morning, there is a real community feel to what happens here at CCSC. A lot of that is due to Peter's presence, openness and genuine interest in those who come here and what they have to say."

Peter is also an innovator. Recently, he facilitated a major move for the Chalmers Centre from rented downtown space to a co-owned community space, a move that will

provide for improved security and expanded programs and services. Peter also helped to initiate the opening of Guelph's first micro-finance program in 2015, creating opportunities for low-income community members to seek out access to small loans.

The relationship- and community-building Peter does every Friday morning informs his board work, ensuring that CCSC is a grounded organization that meets the needs of the community and the people who live here. The Chalmers Community Services Centre is a tremendous success story in Guelph, and Peter is a big reason why.



*Peter and Jill Gill*

## **Retreat! Retreat!**

by Andre Auger

Two years ago, 24 members of the Harcourt congregation went on retreat at Loyola House. The topic was “Designing Tools for the Wilderness.” The premise was that, along with all mainline Protestant and Catholic churches, Harcourt was experiencing something akin to the time in the wilderness which the Israelites experienced upon leaving Egypt and which Jesus experienced after his baptism. A “wilderness” time is one where old ways no longer work and new ways have not yet been figured out.

We are inviting you to another congregational retreat, **from Friday, Sept 16 at 4pm to Sun Sept 18 after lunch**. Time at the retreat will be well-balanced between times to learn, times to pray and reflect, times to share with others, and simple leisure time. The food is always outstanding, rooms were comfortable, and the grounds were beautiful. Last time, some commented that it felt as if they were at a resort, and that it felt good to have time for oneself.

The theme this time is “Learning from the Second Temple” and focuses on lessons we can learn from the Israelites as they return from exile in Babylon, and discover they have to rebuild their Temple – and their faith – from the ground up. As we approach the necessary JNAC brought about by Wendy’s departure, we want to offer the congregation a prayerful time to reflect on the findings of Harcourt 20/20 so far, and to discern where God might be calling us – both as individual members and as a congregation.

As before, half the cost of the retreat will be absorbed by funds from the Spiritual Life pillar. Details about registration and costs will be available shortly. For more information, talk to anyone on the Planning Group – Bill Lord, Sandy Phair, Kathy Magee, Melissa Kiatkowski, Pamela Girardi, Jim Ball, Peter Jackson, Miriam Flynn, or Andre Auger.

## **Park'n Dance Classes Come to Harcourt**

by Arlene Davies-Fuhr, Justice and Outreach

What is Park'n Dance? These hour-long classes are specifically designed for people with Parkinson's. They provide an opportunity to improve balance, flexibility, strength, and coordination as well as to develop strategies for initiating movement, and helping memory. Alison MacNeill provides live music and each session progresses through a variety of sequences. Inclusive accommodations are made for participants who are not able to stand or walk. The movements are challenging but fun, and the atmosphere is one of enjoyment. There is also a half-hour social time that includes light refreshments after each class and continues the comfortable atmosphere and mutual

support. A family member or caregiver is invited to join the class and social time.

Weekly classes are based on Dance for PD®, developed by the Mark Morris Dance Group in Brooklyn, NY, in 2001. Research shows that these classes have important benefits for people with Parkinson's. Park'n Dance classes are led by professional dance teachers trained in Dance for PD®.

Based in dance, these classes are much more than just exercise classes. Neuroscience research has found that combining aesthetics, creativity, and artistry with the physical exercise is of most benefit. Sarah Jane Burton, a movement and dance specialist, is delighted to bring Park'n Dance to Guelph and we at Harcourt are thrilled to sponsor this program. Weekly classes will be held at Harcourt Memorial United Church on **Thursdays, beginning September 15, 2016, at 1:30pm to 2:30pm, and are followed by social time with light refreshments from 2:30pm-3:00pm**. The fee is \$10.00 per class. An accompanying family member, friend or caregiver is welcome to attend for free. For further information or to register for classes, please email: [parkndance@gmail.com](mailto:parkndance@gmail.com) or phone: Sarah Jane Burton at 519-763-3549.

To support the Park'n Dance program, and reach out to people in our community, there are various opportunities for folks at Harcourt:

1. People can be present from 1:30-2:30 for the Thursday afternoon class to help to provide safety and comfort for the Park'n Dance participants.
  2. People can bake two dozen cookies for a particular Thursday's social time.
  3. People can provide some cut-up fruit to be shared during the social time.

For more information, or to sign up for a particular Thursday, please be in touch with the Justice & Outreach committee (Arlene Davies-Fuhr, [abfuhr@teksavvy.com](mailto:abfuhr@teksavvy.com) or Edna Miller, [edna.miller@sympatico.ca](mailto:edna.miller@sympatico.ca))



# **Some Musings about the Woman who Crashed a Dinner Party and Anointed Jesus' Feet, Much to the Chagrin of the Host! (Luke 7.36 - 8.3)**

by Jim Ball

As promised: the sermon notes that were not shared on June 26<sup>th</sup>. Forty years ago, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich wrote, "Well-behaved women seldom make history." The phrase captured people's attention. It went viral and continues to be widely quoted. We find it on everything, from greeting cards to bumper stickers. The woman in Luke's story is one of the not so well behaved people Ulrich was talking about. Though the woman's name remains unknown, her deeds continue to be remembered. Her story is one of the few that appears in all four gospels, which is the kind of bible fact that means, "Pay attention!"

Luke's story concerns a woman who visits Jesus while he is in the home of a religious leader. It is a dinner party and Jesus is one of the guests. This takes place in a cultural environment that is significantly shaped by attitudes concerning honour and shame. It is a society in which people who do the right thing, or are seen with the right people, gain prestige. It is a world in which people who do the wrong thing, or are seen with the wrong people, lose prestige. The host wishes to benefit from Jesus' celebrity. Everyone has been talking about this new young rabbi. They are hash-tagging him and uploading YouTube clips of him and following him all over Galilee. Jesus is ubiquitous. He has gone viral, in a first century sort of way.

What begins with promise for the host suddenly goes bad. This woman shows up. The author paints the scene carefully, describing the woman and the host four separate times in the opening verses. Each is described in terms of their social location and moral status. The woman is described first as a woman of the city (that is to say, "a streetwalker"), second as a sinner, third as a woman with unbound hair, and fourth, again, as a sinner. By contrast, the host is described first as a Pharisee, second as a Pharisee, third as a Pharisee and fourth (no surprise) as a Pharisee. It is a very clear contrast. Pharisees are religious teachers and legal experts and moral examples. They are sticklers for details and rules. For the most part they are good, respectable people. And so, as the story begins, it appears that we are being presented a tale about an honourable host and a disreputable woman.

And then what goes bad for the host gets worse. The woman approaches Jesus, the host's honoured guest, and weeps over him. She dries Jesus' feet with her unbound hair. She kisses Jesus feet. And she anoints them. Worse still is the fact that Jesus allows this. The host, by contrast, attempts to keep himself above it all. He judges those around him. He decides that Jesus is no prophet. And he reiterates that the woman is a

sinner. Once again, the host appears to hold the social high ground. And the woman, and now Jesus, something far less.

But then it gets worse. Jesus does not refer to his host by his title. Jesus does not call him 'a Pharisee'. Instead, Jesus calls him by his name. It would be like attending a state dinner and calling the queen, "Liz." Jesus tells Simon that he has something to say to him. And Simon responds by saying, "What is it, teacher?" He literally says, "Manna, rabbi?" Which is both a question and a challenge. He is more or less saying, "Produce daily bread, teacher. Show us what you've got. Because, so far, you are underachieving!" We can hear the challenge and disdain and irritation in his voice.

But then it gets worse. Jesus tells Simon, his host, a story about debt, and debtors, and forgiveness and love. Why? What is the relation between refusing to forgive a debt and the desperate financial circumstances that surely drove this woman to earn her living on city streets? What exactly is the relationship between Simon and this woman? What is the relationship between Simon's other guests and this woman? How does she know the way to Simon's house? How is she able to get past his servants? Is she a known presence and frequent visitor to Simon's home? Jesus then asks Simon a question, and Simon answers, once again playing judge. Only this time his decision judges himself.

But then it gets worse. Jesus asks Simon if he sees this woman. Really? Is Jesus' kidding? Her presence is a scandal. Her behaviour is a social outrage. The whole affair is public relations nightmare. Simon can't help but see her! But then it gets even worse. Jesus publicly walks through a series of comparisons between Simon's behaviour and the woman's. 'Simon,' Jesus says, 'etiquette dictates that you provide water and washing for your guests, and yet you did not do this for me. But she did. It also dictates that you provide a kiss of greeting for your company, and yet you did not do this for me. But she did. Moreover, it dictates that you provide anointing to all who enter your home, and yet you did not do this for me. But she, to her credit, did.' Jesus names aloud the reasons for a great reversal of status and honour. Simon falls from grace. And the woman is forgiven, lifted and sent on her way. The words used here for forgiveness and rescue are those used elsewhere in the bible concerning both debt and sin. They are used to declare relief from work, which we call Sabbath, and to declare relief from disenfranchisement, which we call jubilee - a year of debt forgiveness and the possibility of a do-over. The good news is the same in both first and second testaments: both lift up the possibility of a world in which debt is forgiven and land is returned and the oppressed are set free. It is also a world in which oppressors come to see the trap of their trappings, and are brought to ground, and humbled, that they too might begin again, this time building healthier, fairer and more compassionate lives.

Every story we encounter, both ancient and new, raises similar questions in us: What does the story actually say? How do we interpret it? What lens do we use? And in

what ways might we live differently because of how we've read? We are invited to consider afresh these questions in relation to Luke's story. To consider, learn and grow.

When we spend time with Luke's tale, when we observe the care of its construction, the judicious use of its language, the code words it employs and the hypocrisy it will not suffer, much is revealed. One take away is clear: we ought to not ever ask Jesus to dinner unless we are really prepared to welcome what he stands for and whom he stands with. We ought never to invite him unless we are ready to see afresh just how far into the world our tables, and our hearts, extend. To see and rejoice. To see and weep. And to see and, by grace, deepen the solidarity we already live.

## A Meaningful Skylight – Let's Reflect

by Merrill Pierce

Nurturing a narrative of hope, joy and transformation, this was only the second year of the Skylight Festival - a celebratory and creative space where diverse communities come together to explore arts, faith, peace and justice. All participants at the Skylight Festival that happened July 28-31<sup>st</sup> this past summer in Paris, Ontario, are invited to come and share their experiences after the Blessing of the Animals service on **September 25th**. We will gather in the Friendship Room after the service and have lunch together. Please bring a lunch for you and your family, and drinks will be supplied. Anyone who was unable to attend, but would like to hear about it is invited to join us as well. Child care will be provided. Looking forward to hearing about all your reflections and experiences.



*Look How Easy It is...Sign Up To Help Make  
After Church Coffee Today!*

# CORDUROY ROAD

## Church in the Park featuring Corduroy Road in Concert



**Sunday, September 11, 2016, 7:04 pm  
At Royal City Park Band Shell**

**Bring a chair, a blanket, a friend, a non-perishable food item for Chalmers Community Services .... But not a pew.**

Sponsored by



A partnership of: the Guelph United Churches of Dublin, Harcourt, Three Willows and Trinity, Chalmers Community Services and Rising Spirit

## Only 18 Weeks Until Christmas! *All Things Christmas* Reminder

PLANNING AHEAD! The back to School Ads are starting to appear and that is a hint that we should be looking ahead to Harcourt's major Fall Event: **The All Things Christmas gathering and sale.** Last year realized just over \$5000!



Now is the time to be gathering dried garden material, items suitable for enhancing the wonderful outdoor and indoor arrangements and setting aside some preserves for the bake table. We are happy to accept donations of large plastic pots to use for the large arrangements and even any potting soil you may have left over. It is also a good time to gather grape vines, seed pods etc.

We will be holding a planning meeting early in the fall, so please watch for an announcement in the weekly bulletin. All those interested in helping in the kitchen to prepare the delicious lunch, looking after sales, gathering greens in November, or creating seasonal displays are welcome to join us.

We probably have more fun preparing for All Things Christmas than those who come to buy. If you have questions, please contact the Harcourt Office, Ann Middleton, Janet Webster.

## Report from the *Living the Questions* Series

by Andre Auger, Adult Faith Formation

*"...have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms or books written in a very foreign language. Don't search for the answers which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer."* (Rilke, p. 34-35)

Eight or nine of us have been meeting for 21 Saturdays since the early Fall 2015, watching a DVD series called "Living the Questions 2.0," and sharing about our faith. We are seekers. We are deeply committed to Jesus and truly wish to follow His way, but have found that, over the years, the traditional theology we had been taught no longer helped us on our journey toward a deeper relationship with God. We needed a safe

place to explore new approaches to theology. So, on Saturday mornings, we gathered as a small community, learned from theologians and Christian leaders who are rethinking the foundations of our faith, and, prayerfully and respectfully tried to articulate our responses, and to listened to others as they did the same.

We've explored new ways to take the Bible seriously but not literally, we've deconstructed the traditional "Jesus died for our sins," and placed his death in the context of his resistance to the dominant culture of his time – and learned, in the process, that that is what we too are called to do in our time. We learned to appreciate Paul once more, after sifting through what is now considered "authentic" Paul and what was written by reactionary followers who thought he was too radical. We learned to critique the myth of "redemptive violence" and to reaffirm the essential non-violence of Jesus' vision of God's Dream for humanity. Above all we learned that, rather than using images of a super human being out-there somewhere to refer to God, we were better off with an image of God in all things and all things in God – known as "panentheism."

As we watched and listened to such scholars as John Cobb, John Dominic Crossan, John Spong, Walter Brueggemann, Diana Butler Bass, and so many others, we gathered strength and confidence that our discomfort at traditional theological explanations was not due to our lack of faith, but that we were thinking along the lines of so many contemporary scholars and theologians. As we shared, we sensed that our own faith positions were becoming slightly more firm and clear. We found ourselves with other seekers who, like us, were struggling to make sense of their experience of God and of life, and, far from shutting us down, allowed us to wrestle with language and ideas and feelings, and make sense of our faith for ourselves.

We have taken a break over the summer, but we are reconvening in the Fall, starting Saturday September 24<sup>th</sup>, to continue our exploration of this new theological territory, which has come to be known as "Progressive Christianity," for lack of a better term. We will be studying "An Alternative Orthodoxy," with Richard Rohr, and "Violence Divine," with John Dominic Crossan. You're welcome to join us!

*Ref: Rilke, R. M. (1986). Letters to a Young Poet. Vintage Press.*

## Let's Make Beautiful Music Together!

Attention adult recorder players! Whether you play sopranino, soprano, alto, tenor, base or any other type of recorder...we are looking for adults who would like to join a new Harcourt recorder group that will meet once or twice a month starting in September. All levels of ability are welcome! We will practice and play together for fun and perform as a group at an occasional church service. Please give Alison or Gill at toot at [alison@harcourtuc.ca](mailto:alison@harcourtuc.ca) or Gill Joseph at [gjoseph@clearpane.ca](mailto:gjoseph@clearpane.ca).

# Harcourt Communal Garden News

by Jill Gill

Welcome back from a very hot, humid and dry summer. The Harcourt Communal Garden (entirely maintained by volunteers) has yielded 74.4 kgs (163.7 lbs) of produce so far, which we donated to Chalmers Community Services Centre food pantry at 40 Baker Street. This was possible in spite of some skullduggery in the form of a groundhog that ate all our bean plants and kale – twice. Even though the dry weather has created some headaches, the fact that we have a rudimentary irrigation system and four rain barrels has allowed us to harvest just 5 kgs less than last year – amazing! As well as vegetables, we grow herbs in decent quantities. Although these don't add much to the weight of our harvest, they are really appreciated by our guests at CCSC and allow them to add delicious flavours to their cooking.



This is our sixth season of growing vegetables, berries and herbs, according to a requested basket by CCSC, for guests who experience food insecurity. So far we have provided them with more than 3,400 lbs of organic, local food to enjoy.

All this wonderful outreach work would not happen without the hard work of our many volunteers. This year we have 10 volunteers who work in teams of 3 each week to plant, weed and harvest. This way each person only has to commit to working a few hours a month, on average, and everyone has the opportunity to work in a group for more fun, fellowship and learning possibilities. If this sounds like an activity that you would like to take part in, please contact Jill Gill at [peter.gill@sympatico.ca](mailto:peter.gill@sympatico.ca) for more details. No expertise in gardening is required (we have several folks with plenty of gardening knowledge), just a willingness to learn and get your hands dirty.

Our next big garden work ‘party’ will happen on **Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup> from 12:30-3:30 p.m.** Please save the date for this fun event. All folks are welcome, even if you are not a regular volunteer in the Harcourt Communal Garden. We will be joined that day by several student volunteers from the University of Guelph’s Project Serve Program. Let’s show them what an amazing ‘Green’ community we are. Remember to dress for the weather, bring drinking water, gardening gloves and any hand tools/fork/spade you might have. If you have a wheel barrow, please consider bringing it along. In order to have sufficient snacks for the group, please let me know that you will be attending. Contact Jill Gill at [peter.gill@sympatico.ca](mailto:peter.gill@sympatico.ca)

## New Directions, Perhaps...

by Peter Jackson for Spiritual Life

Harcourt's Spiritual Life Committee and Covenanted Spiritual Companions met in retreat for one Saturday during July. Rev Miriam Flynn and Megan Ward also participated, as friends to our work with fresh eyes. The purpose of the retreat was to refresh ourselves, individually and collectively.

We spent the most time meditating on and discussing our deepest yearnings for Harcourt. The meditation was based on Jesus's lament over Jerusalem as told in Matthew 23:37-39: "*Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you, desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.'*"

When we shared the results of our meditations, a few themes emerged. We had time to discuss three of them.

### Outreach/Chalmers/Diversity

We observed that in some sense, Chalmers provides the way for us to be "Harcourt downtown." We gave some thought to how we might enhance our presence at Chalmers, without getting trapped into a 'service club' model. We wondered whether it is time to think of a "Manna" worship service for Downtown.

Another idea was to invite guests from Chalmers to speak at our worship services, helping to open our eyes to life beyond the predominant monoculture of being white and middle class. An approach such as the "Awakening" series that Spiritual Life ran a couple of years ago might help speakers experience the benefit of being listened to and heard, and not feel that they are being treated as 'entertainers' for us.

The larger question, perhaps, is how we can ensure that Harcourt is a community where people can get what they need.

### Small Groups

Small Groups are a way of incubating fledgling chicks – to pick up Jesus' words to Jerusalem. They are in essence new growth, often at the periphery of the congregation, and are often a door into it. In small groups people find the intimacy that helps to build Christ-centred community. We noted the power of personal invitation to a Small Group.

We noted the distinction between “small groups” and “small communities.” The first are theme-oriented and of limited duration, such as the study and activity groups sponsored by Christian Formation. Limited duration is attractive to people who don’t want to make long-term commitments.

Small communities are focused on the community itself and its members. They tend to be on-going. Manna and the 9 AM service are like small communities, as are the people who regularly sit close to each other at the 10:30 service. Many ongoing Committees and activity groups also become small communities over time. They may tend to become ‘closed’ - or at least, more difficult for newcomers to penetrate. Several of us felt that we want to create a Small Group or Community focused exclusively on contemplative practice.

We wondered how to capture the flavour of a future Harcourt composed of small groups and communities, to attempt to counter the tendency to equate “Harcourt” with the 10:30 service. We talked of a “republic,” a collection of tribes, a constellation rather than the solar system. We asked: where is the centre that holds it all together? Our answer is the Christ.

### Experiencing versus witnessing spiritual growth

We noted the difference between experiencing God and talking about God. It seems fairly obvious that personal experience of God is the more promising way to deepen a personal relationship with God. So we need to beware the trap of simply talking about God.

However, witnessing someone else’s spiritual journey can be a powerful impetus for listeners to move further in their own journeys. The description of someone else’s personal experience can help us see our own experience in a new light, or encourage us to try ways of opening ourselves to God that are new to us.

We noted that there is a wide diversity of ways of relating to God; God comes alive in people in different ways - in meditation and prayer, in personal conversation, in the work of our hands and minds. No matter what the path of relationship is, it is important that it be named, appreciated and honoured. We reinforced the importance of “spiritual conversations,” whether formal or informal, one-on-one or in small groups. We reinforced the importance of good listeners.

Finally, we noted the need to pay attention to the shift in spiritual life between first and second half of life. The real question in the second half is “How do I “simply be?””. The question for us is how we can help “Marthas” name their “Mary” experience.

## Next steps

We will be using the energy and ideas gained in this retreat as a springboard for our individual and collective service to Harcourt in the coming year. As well as the three themes described here, we have other ideas from the retreat. For example, one member suggested that a strategic focus for the next year might be to help ensure that the spiritual dimension of decisions involved in Harcourt's 20/20 process are honoured. Another member reported a provocative question that came unbidden during our meditation: in what ways is Harcourt like the inn-keeper who had no room for Joseph and Mary, maintaining our building and refusing to house the birth of something new?

We hope that these few notes will be a helpful addition to the 20/20 material that we all have to consider in the next few weeks. And if you have a comment to offer to the deliberations of Spiritual Life and the Covenanted Spiritual Companions, we'd love to hear from you.



*"Our growth consultant thinks the term church sounds outdated."*

# Introducing Rev. Miriam Flynn

by Marilyn Sears, M&P Committee

Many of us who have been to church during the summer have already had a chance to meet and visit with Miriam, our transitional minister who will be replacing Rev

Wendy Brown. Miriam began her ministry at Harcourt on July 1 and has jumped into her new role `with both feet` . Miriam`s appointment is Minister for Worship, Pastoral Care and Justice and Outreach, while Jim Ball`s appointment continues to be Minister for Worship, Pastoral Care and Christian Life. These are equal appointments with equal, but different responsibilities, although the ministers often provide support for one another's ministry.



Miriam was ordained into the United Church of Canada in May after completing her ministry

requirements at Emmanuel College. She is a second career minister who worked for many years as a litigation lawyer. Miriam followed a strong call to ministry that began seven years ago as she participated in a visioning process being carried out within her home congregation. She remains committed to collaborative discovery of the "new thing" God is calling forth in our midst today. Miriam is mother to two grown children, Rachel and Peter, and lives in Waterdown with her husband, Rick. We will definitely learn more about Miriam in the months ahead as she is very friendly and likes to provide stories about her life and interests in her Sunday messages. We look forward to working with Miriam as friends and lay ministers this year. Welcome Miriam!

## The Angels in Our Harcourt Office

by Kathy Magee

"It's not about the office. It's about the congregation. That's why I'm here." So begins Anne Purkis' description of her role as our church administrator. For the past several months, as a volunteer in the office, I have had the privilege of working with



Anne. It is very clear that the church office, with Anne at the helm, is the hub of life at Harcourt. The phone is ringing, the computer is pinging, people from Harcourt and the wider community are coming in with an amazing array of questions, requests, room bookings or simply to say hello and touch base. Anne handles it all with grace, compassion and efficiency. Can't find what you are looking for? Need more information? Wondering who to give your report to? Need help with a project? Looking for community resources? Ask Anne. She will point you in the right direction.

Anne is responsible to Ministry and Personnel, but in her words, "God and the congregation are really the office bosses". She supervises Darko, our custodian, Nick our electronic communications coordinator, our summer office students, and office volunteers, Heather Sullivan and I. She supports the ministerial staff in a myriad of ways and is a liaison with Council. She works closely with Brian Magee, our treasurer, to provide accurate accounting for a very busy place.

When I asked Anne what we, as the congregation, need to keep her informed of, she identified several areas:

- recent changes in contact information
- PAR/offering envelop changes or questions
- requesting or cancelling your Observer subscription
- changes to receiving the E-Weekly

Thinking for a moment, she added with her lovely smile, "Or if they have a question and are not sure who to ask, they can ask me".

Nick Swan is our electronic communications coordinator. He has very specific responsibilities and very limited time in the office. He accomplishes a great deal while he is there!

### **What Nick Does:**

- Works with the Worship team to create weekly Order of Service and Life & Work components of the Sunday bulletin
- Prepares visual material (pictures, announcements, songs etc.) for screens in Sunday worship
- Maintains AV equipment in conjunction with the Tech Team (ECT)
- Coordinates Sunday AV volunteers
- **Works Thursday and Friday**
- Covers the office on Fridays – greets visitors, checks phone messages



### **What Nick Does Not Do**

- Check Anne's emails
- Do bookings
- Prepare the Harcourt E-weekly

- Maintain the Harcourt website
- Maintain office computer equipment

Because the responsibilities of those in the office are so diverse and variable, Anne has developed some guidelines to help us.

### **1. Booking Space for Events & Meetings**

Contact Anne as far in advance as possible to book space to ensure you get the date, time and space you prefer. Include set-up and cleanup time.

### **2. Distribution and Filing of Policies, Council and Committee Minutes**

Meeting minutes are emailed to Anne for distribution to Council, Committees and Teams. Council and Committee minutes and Harcourt policies are kept on file in the office both electronically and in hard copy.

### **3. Sharing/ Publicizing Events, Meetings & Announcements**

Harcourt has various bulletin boards on which you may post items. Please be very clear about where/how you would like the info shared. Be concise or be edited. We reserve the right to edit as needed.

<b>Form of Communication</b>	<b>Who to Contact</b>	<b>Due Dates</b>
Facebook	Marion Auger - <a href="mailto:facebook@harcourtuc.ca">facebook@harcourtuc.ca</a>	ASAP
GUM Calendar*	Anne Purkis - <a href="mailto:office@harcourtuc.ca">office@harcourtuc.ca</a>	ASAP
Harcourt E-Weekly*	Anne Purkis - <a href="mailto:office@harcourtuc.ca">office@harcourtuc.ca</a>	Wednesday, noon
Harcourt Herald	Gill Joseph - <a href="mailto:herald@harcourtuc.ca">herald@harcourtuc.ca</a>	20th of each month
Harcourt Website* & Online Calendar	Anne Purkis - <a href="mailto:office@harcourtuc.ca">office@harcourtuc.ca</a>	ASAP
Sunday Life & Work announcements	Anne Purkis - <a href="mailto:office@harcourtuc.ca">office@harcourtuc.ca</a>	Wednesdays, 12 pm
Twitter	Gill Joseph - #harcourtuc or <a href="mailto:gjoseph@clearpane.ca">gjoseph@clearpane.ca</a>	ASAP

**\*Harcourt related events and information only please.** In some instances, these items could be shared with GUM and the wider United Church. Please let Anne know if you would like your event in the Harcourt calendar on the GUM website.

**Harcourt events or groups open to the wider community:** Contact Anne for the *Revised Marketing Opportunities List*, updated August 2015. This is a great tool to guide you in spreading the word beyond Harcourt.

**The church office hours are Monday to Friday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., with a lunch break at noon.** If you have a question or request that will need Anne's undivided time and attention, it is a good idea to call ahead so she may set aside time and space to meet with you. "Being respectful of their time and mine goes a long way in getting things accomplished."

Anne and the office staff are an amazing team that keeps things running smoothly through times of calm, through times of chaos or turmoil, and always with Harcourt's life and mission as the focus. How blessed we are!

## Preamble to A Summary of 20/20 Conversations

by Bill Lord and Peter Jackson

In early August, we provided to the Steering Team a summary of the conversation groups held in June. The Steering Team found the summary to be a helpful snapshot of Harcourt. It will be one of the inputs to the Congregational Joint Needs Assessment process described in Lorraine Holding's 20/20 News (as highlighted in *Council News* above) in this issue. The Steering Team asked that the summary be published in the Herald, and asked us to compose this preamble suggesting how people might go about reading and considering it. Here are our suggestions:

- 
- First, read the summary a couple of times. Ask yourself how it does or does not ring true in relation to what you see and hear at Harcourt week by week.
  - Second, consider which of the three 'narratives' best corresponds to how you actually see Harcourt today.
  - Third, consider which of the three 'narratives' best corresponds to how you would like to see Harcourt.
  - Fourth, consider the extent to which each of the 'narratives' is alive in you.
  - Fifth, talk with other people about your thoughts, after church, over coffee or wherever.

We will be available to respond as best we can to any questions you may have in a brief session after worship on September 11.

## The 20/20 Report Summary:

In June 2016, ten groups of about ten people met in homes, with facilitators and a note taker, to appreciate the diversity of Harcourt life and ministry, the glue that holds people to our groups and activities, and the resources people will commit. These purposes were largely achieved. The 44 pages of notes record many ideas to consider; they are available from the church office. Although some people can participate less actively than before, there is widespread appreciation of personal connections, of the Spirit's presence and of our progressive, affirming, prayerful, spiritual, richly resourced community. Talk about Harcourt's future evokes mixed emotions, including pride in Harcourt and our many ministries, acceptance of changing involvements as we age, anxiety that few younger people participate, sadness that the church as we knew it is dying, and urgency to engage in new ways of being Christ's body. Withal, there are three overlapping understandings of our shared future.

The Narrative Of Slow Death: Many participants spoke of aging, declining energy and death. They are concerned about Harcourt's finances and growing dependence on rental income. They lament the lack of hospitality outreach but want to support friends, take on manageable tasks and give financial support. Some want to scale back expenses while keeping high-quality worship and music; others want to enhance ministry to the sick, shut-ins, dying and bereaved.

The Narrative Of Revitalization: Some participants believe Harcourt can be revitalized without profound change. Congregants are seen as spiritual consumers, and we need to market our 'spiritual products' better and respond to the needs of target demographics. Some suggest copying congregations and denominations seen as successful. More effective links to the surrounding community are seen as key, as is enhanced use of social media and internet tools.

The Narrative of Radical Change: Some participants are unwilling to put their energies into 'propping up the status quo': they want us to experiment with diversity and dynamic change. They see Harcourt becoming a community of small, intimate groups focused on spiritual development, missional outreach and passing on our sacred stories. They want us to live a discipleship model of shared ministry; to be more open to learning from other socioeconomic groups and cultures; to investigate deeper sharing with GUM; and to allow 'ahas' to bubble up as we explore who we are in a rapidly changing society. Manna is held up as a prototype.

Our comment: We see the challenge for Harcourt as having six parts:

1. Allowing the truths of each narrative to coexist in creative conversation.
2. Assigning resources suitably between the needs of slow death, revitalization and radical change, recognizing that all will be funded primarily by the current, declining congregation.
3. Discerning the predominant leadership style and skills needed for the next few years in paid, accountable staff, e.g. a pastoral style with traditional worship skills; a pacesetting, top-down style with marketing skills; or a relational, empowering style with innovation skills.
4. Moving over time to a model in which small groups and small communities, including the traditional '10:30' service, interact as a galaxy of equals within Harcourt.
5. Providing safe space for experimentation by small groups as they live into their mission.
6. Recognizing that Harcourt's 'glue' will be the love of Christ, commitment to progressive theology, affirmation of diversity, shared values and strong internal communications.

## Harcourt's Grocery Card Program (Fundscrip)

by Frank Webster

Fundscrip is a fundraising program that uses gift cards from Metro, Food Basics and all Loblaw stores (Zehrs, No Frills). Harcourt receives 3% of sales. Gift cards are available from \$50 to \$250 and are on sale at the Lucy Booth on Sundays and the church office during the week. Please consider supporting this initiative.



# Announcements

## PASSING:



**ROADHOUSE, Mildred (nee Cormie).** Passed away peacefully Monday, July 11, 2016; she was in her 94th year. Mildred was predeceased by her husband Floyd Roadhouse and was mother of Don (Sharon, of Redbridge), David (Carmen, both predeceased), Carolyn (Don Taylor, of Utah) and Sandra (Joe Evers, of Oakville). Mildred moved to Guelph to study business and work at Woolworth's Department store, during which time she met and married Floyd. Mildred was very active supporting Girl Guides. A memorial service to celebrate her life will be planned in late fall to enable some out-of-country family members to attend. A donation to the Girl Guides of Canada [www.girlguides.ca](http://www.girlguides.ca) in her memory would help continue Mildred's impact on young women. A

*tree will be planted in memory of Mildred P. Roadhouse in the Wall-Custance Memorial Forest, University of Guelph Arboretum. Dedication service, Sunday, September 18, 2016 at 2:30 p.m.*



**SMILLIE, Joy Charmian (nee Fuller).** Passed away peacefully after a brief illness, at Guelph General Hospital on Monday, July 18 in her 89th year. Predeceased by husband William (2011) and son Craig (2012), Joy is survived by Cameron (Carolynn) of Brantford, daughter-in-law Judi Prigione (Craig) of Guelph, Clark of Toronto and Clyde (Lynda) of Guelph and sister Trudy. Born and raised in Toronto, Joy was subsequently a long time active member of Harcourt United Church in Guelph. She took delight in her extensive worldwide travels, was an avid reader and enthusiastic participant in choir and Guelph Needlecraft. She will be remembered for her unflagging dedication and service of more

than 68 years to Girl Guides of Canada. In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Joy made to Harcourt United Church or the Girl Guides of Canada would be appreciated.

## **WEDDINGS:**

Mary Harding and Jock Rutherford, August 6, 2016

Rachelle Ganesh and Jermaine Bain, August 12, 2016

## **BAPTISMS:**

May 29, 2016:

Abigail Elizabeth Collecchio

Camdyn Mary Corstorphine

## **BIRTHS:**

Keith & Esther Devolin welcome a new grandson, Fynyx (Fin ix) Ryu (Ree you), born June 7 in Japan. Proud parents are Carolyn DeVishlin & Dan Devolin.

Baby Paige Catherine born on August 11 (8 lb 3.5 oz) a daughter for Beth and Michael Gasior, granddaughter for Cathy Dean and John Phelps

## **CONFIRMATIONS:**

June 26, 2016:

Lillian Carvalho

Blair Janzen

Kaitlyn Lew

## **OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Join the Kitchener Symphony at Harcourt Church on Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 8PM for a concert of Haydn and Ravel conducted by Christopher Rountree. Two works full of humour and delight anchor this colourful program. For tickets visit [https://kwsymphony.ca/2016\\_17/baroque/bar1.php](https://kwsymphony.ca/2016_17/baroque/bar1.php) or telephone 519 745-4711 or 888 745-4717.

## *Behind the Scenes*

### Religion and America's Election, Trump Doesn't Do Beatitudes

by Dennis Gruending (Used with the Author's permission)

In her nomination speech to the Democratic National Convention in July, former U.S. Senator and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton described her Methodist faith as the foundation of her activism. “[My mother] made sure I learned the words of our Methodist faith,” she said “Do all the good you can, for all the people you can, in all the ways you can, as long as ever you can.” This is almost Sermon-on-the-Mount material, and one hopes that Clinton actually means it.

### Trump and evangelicals

Meanwhile, her political rival Donald Trump says that he’s a Presbyterian. But in his nomination speech to the Republican National Convention, he only explicitly mentioned religion while praising evangelical Christians. “I would like to thank the evangelical community,” Trump said, “because, I will tell you what, the support they have given me — and I’m not sure I totally deserve it — has been so amazing.” Trump’s gratitude is understandable. For decades, white evangelicals have been the bedrock of Republican support. In 2012, they voted 73 percent to 21 percent for Mitt Romney over Barack Obama, and a poll published by the Pew Research Center in July indicated that an even greater percentage of them intend to support Trump in 2016. This is especially significant because evangelical Christians in the U.S. make up about 30 percent of the population or 100 million people. They also have their own network of churches, schools, colleges and media outlets which can be mobilized during elections. The assumption, generally, is that most evangelicals are suspicious of “big government” and would prefer a throwback to an era when families and the church took care of their own. Ironically, however, it was Democrat Bill Clinton who balanced the budget and Republicans, including Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush who rang up enormous government deficits, much of that attributable to military spending.

### Evangelicals and sexual politics

In reality, however, sexual politics are likely a more important issue than economics as the basis for white evangelical support for the Republicans. Most evangelicals are deeply opposed to a woman’s right to end a pregnancy if she chooses and also to same sex unions and marriages. The Republican platform contains language that is anti-abortion and anti-gay while the Democrats are clearly pro-choice.

For most (but not all) evangelicals, the ideal candidate embodies a combination of family values, as evangelicals see them, and personal integrity. Trump, however, has been divorced twice with sexual affairs thrown in. He is a real estate magnate who owns both hotels and gambling casinos. And his companies have declared bankruptcy four

times, leaving creditors and workers in the lurch. Yet Trump has been embraced by evangelical leaders, such as Jerry Falwell Jr., who took over as president of Liberty University in 2007, upon the death of his ever-controversial father. The younger Falwell says that “Donald Trump is God’s man to lead our nation.”

### **Power not compassion**

In response, writer Peter Wehner, who has served in three Republican administrations, said that Trump holds a worldview that “is incompatible with Christianity.” Trump is all about power, Wehner wrote. He holds anyone he considers weak or vulnerable in contempt, including prisoners of war and people with disabilities, as well as those who he considers physically unattractive and politically powerless. He is a bully who “disdains compassion and empathy.” So expect no Sermon on the Mount from him.

### **No lock on people of faith**

But Trump, it turns out, doesn’t have a lock on people of religious faith. He has offended and frightened Latinos by calling them criminals and rapists, actually promising to build a wall between Mexico and the U.S. Latinos, however, now represent 17 percent of the American population and fully one-third of the nation’s 50 million Catholics. The latest Pew poll showed that registered Latinos intend to vote for Clinton by a margin of 77 percent to 16 percent, which would provide her with a 17-point advantage among all registered Catholic voters.

Trump is also using his “law and order” campaign to target blacks, although somewhat more subtly than his overtly racist attacks on Latinos and Muslims. Nonetheless, black churchgoers understand what Trump is doing. The Pew pollsters also anticipate that registered voters among black Protestants plan to vote for Clinton by a margin of 89 percent to 8 percent.

### **Beatitudes may sink Trump**

Trump, in turn, will continue focussing on white voters while the Republicans will likely attempt to suppress the vote of Latinos and blacks — a strategy that has been used in the past. The chances are good, however, that changing demographics — combined with attention to the beatitudes — will finally sink the reality TV star in November.

*Dennis Gruending is an Ottawa-based author and blogger and a former member of Parliament. He has worked in print, radio and television and has written seven books. He writes a blog for the United Church Observer and his blog pieces also appear regularly on Rabble.ca. He is a member of the Parliamentary Press Gallery in Ottawa. An abbreviated version of this post appeared with the United Church Observer on August 11, 2016*

## Harcourt Calendar – September 2016

Updated August 15, 2016—[www.harcourtuc.ca](http://www.harcourtuc.ca) for most up-to-date information

### **Saturday September 3**

6:00pm Chalmers Saturday Night Suppers

### **Sunday September 4**

10:00am Worship [S]

10:30am "Manna" Service [G/F]

### **Monday September 5**

**Labour Day – Office and Church Closed**

### **Tuesday September 6**

11:30am Staff & Admin Meetings

6:45 Cubs [G]

7:00pm Handbell Choir [M]

### **Wednesday September 7**

1:30pm Tai Chi [F]

6:45pm Beavers [G]

7:00pm Rainbow Chorus Registration [S]

7:30pm Rainbow Chorus Rehearsal [S]

7:30pm Flute Choir [M]

### **Thursday September 8**

9:30am Stroke Recovery Executive [F]

6:00pm Preschool Orientation [G]

6:30pm GUM meeting [C]

7:30pm Choir Practice [M]

### **Saturday September 10**

9:00am Writing Workshop [F]

### **Sunday September 11**

9:00am Worship [C]

10:30am Worship [S]

10:30am "Manna" Service [G/F]

12:00pm Senior Transitions Kick Off Lunch[F]

### **Monday September 12**

11:45am Carolyn Harcourt Women's Fellowship [F]

1:30pm Prayer Shawl Group [202]

5:30pm Pride and Prejudice [202]

7:00pm Scouts [G]

### **Tuesday September 13**

10:30am Senior Transitions [F]

11:30am Staff & Admin Meetings

6:45 Cubs [G]

7:00pm Communications Committee [L]

7:00pm Handbell Choir [M]

### **Wednesday September 14**

7:00am Men's Group [F]

9:30am Lightshine Singers [F]

1:30pm Tai Chi [F]

6:30pm Guides [F]

6:45pm Beavers [G]

7:00pm Ministry & Personnel Committee [L]

7:00pm Property Committee [C]

7:00pm Rainbow Chorus Registration [S]

7:30pm Rainbow Chorus Rehearsal [S]

7:30pm Flute Choir [M]

### **Thursday September 15**

8:45am Mindstretch [C]

1:30pm Park'n Dance [G, F]

6:30pm Zumba [G]

7:30pm Choir Practice [M]

### **Sunday September 18**

9:00am Worship [C]

10:30am Worship [S]

10:30am "Manna" Service [G/F]

### **Monday September 19**

1:30pm Prayer Shawl Group [202]

7:00pm Women's Spirituality [C]

7:00pm Scouts [G]

### **Tuesday September 20**

10:30am Senior Transitions [C]

11:30am Stroke Recovery Lunch [F]

11:30am Staff & Admin Meetings

6:45pm Cubs [G]

7:00pm Handbell Choir [M]

**Wednesday September 21**

9:30am Lightshine Singers [F]  
1:30pm Tai Chi [F]  
6:30pm Guides [F]  
6:45pm Beavers [G]  
7:00pm Council Meeting [C]  
7:30pm Rainbow Chorus Rehearsal [S]  
7:30pm Flute Choir [M]

**Thursday September 22**

8:45am Mindstretch [C]  
1:30pm Park'n Dance [G, F]  
6:30pm Zumba [G]  
7:30pm Choir Practice [M]

**Saturday September 24**

10:00am Explorations in Progressive Christianity [202]  
20/20 Workshops [G/F]

**Sunday September 25**

*Blessing of the Animals*  
9:00am Worship [C]  
10:30am Worship [S]

**Monday September 26**

9:30am Quilting Group [F]  
1:30pm Prayer Shawl Group [202]  
6:00pm ARCH Men's Group [202]  
7:00pm Ignatian Exercises [C]  
7:00pm Scouts [G]

**Tuesday September 27**

10:30am Senior Transitions [F]  
11:30am Staff & Admin Meetings  
1:30pm GUM Pastoral Care [C]  
6:45pm Cubs [G]  
7:00pm Handbell Choir [M]

**Wednesday September 28**

9:30am Lightshine Singers [F]  
1:30pm Tai Chi [F]  
6:30pm Guides [F]  
6:45pm Beavers [G]  
7:30pm Rainbow Chorus Rehearsal [S]  
7:30pm Flute Choir [M]

**Thursday September 29**

8:45am Mindstretch [C]  
1:30pm Park'n Dance [G, F]  
6:30pm Zumba [G]  
7:30pm Choir Practice [M]