

Woodlawn United Church Newsletter

March 2022



WORD IN MY HEART

March 2022

Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

This short Scripture can easily be memorized and will come to mind when we have difficulties. In fact, it can be helpful now as we experience the Omicron wave. The verse is from Paul's letter to the Philippians. He explains that he has experienced both good and bad times, but since coming to know the Spirit of Jesus Christ, he has God's assurance that he can persevere through it all. This simple verse reminds us that Jesus is there for us too, always.

- Peace and Blessings, Rev. Mary Lynne

RANDOM NOTES OF THANKFULNESS

We at Woodlawn realize that the church is the sum of its parts and the great work that each of us does for one another and for the community around us as we glorify God together. We also realize that we do not do this good work to be thanked but we do have the God-given opportunity to give thanks. With this in mind, each month will seek to offer a few well-deserved "random notes of thankfulness."

Thanks to **Vicky May** for creating the cards for the "Caring Card Committee". Her time and talent is very appreciated by the team that writes in and sends the cards out.

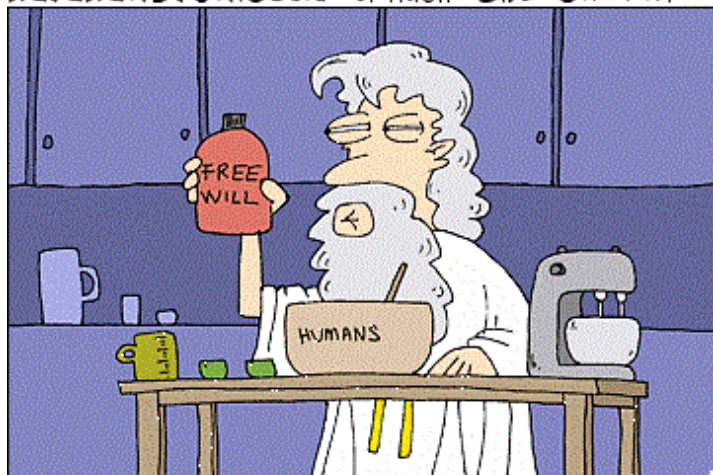
Thanks to **Joan Mikkelsen** for getting all of those income tax receipts out on time!

Thanks to so many Woodlawn members who are able to give through Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR). These dedicated PAR donations have meant a great deal in allowing Woodlawn to continue its ministries through the pandemic time.

Thanks to the great team of **volunteers** who helped organize, prepare and conduct this year's Annual General Meeting.

We realize we cannot thank everyone every month, but it is hoped we can raise up in a *Spirit of Thanksgiving*, a few well deserving souls each month. Thank you for all you do!

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EVER WONDER IF GOD HAD ANY SECOND THOUGHTS?

LENTEN ENVELOPES FOR MISSION & SERVICE

From Mary Osborne

Lent is upon us, and like last year, rather than preparing the pill bottles for the "Toonies for M & S" project, the Stewardship committee is doing something a little different (continuing to be pandemic friendly) this year. Rather than receiving a bottle to collect change in, or to insert a cheque, you will receive a Lenten Envelope with your Easter letter. *Note: this is still a separate initiative from the special Easter envelope you will also receive with your Easter Letter.*

But the challenge remains the same: you can "give something up for Lent" such as your daily coffee run, and use that spare money to put in your envelope, or you can simply and generously place a cheque in the envelope for Lent. Either way, all monies help the projects that M & S supports, and are very much appreciated. Monies received will go toward projects in Canada and throughout the world, such as:

- Your gift will support people facing personal and financial challenges by providing them with essential food and clothing – Brunswick St. Mission, Halifax.
- Your gift will help provide the people of Chipata, Democratic Republic of the Congo with a safe and accessible water supply.
- Your gift will help one child stay in school by supporting their annual tuition – The Middle East
- Your gift will provide a safe space to heal and grow for children and youth who have been trafficked – North India.

Loving our neighbour is at the heart of our Mission & Service. This is an opportunity for everyone to love their neighbour – people across the globe we will never meet, people who we may see but whom we do not actually know, and people we already know and love - they are all our neighbours, and in our small way, we can help them near and far.

The Easter Letter will be sent out by mid March and we ask that you return your Lenten Envelope by mail, or by dropping it off to the church during the month of April. On behalf of Mission and Service we extend many thanks for all support to M & S.

WOODLAWN MUSIC NOTES

Submitted by June Rigden

Woodlawn Choir members have kept busy throughout this last isolation, rehearsing on Zoom to keep voices in shape, learning new music, and recording parts for some virtual choir anthems. Thank you to all who learned new tech skills and mustered the inner strength to sing alone at home.



We are very excited to return to in-person rehearsals beginning Thursday, March 3, at 6:45pm. Going forward, we will use a blended approach where live rehearsals will be recorded and guide videos created for those still at home. Anthems will be learned together, and some will be presented in person while some will be offered via recording, thus including all our members in sharing God's message through song. We will also feature smaller ensembles from time to time, and want you to know that during rehearsals and services, the safety of all will be our utmost concern.

From June, Gus, and the Woodlawn Choir to all of you. We look forward to making music together again. Please contact June Rigden if you are yearning for a place to sing and would like to join us.

I'M NOT GIVING UP HOPE FOR LENT

Rev. Dr. Dale Skinner

"Hope deferred makes the heart sick..." (Proverbs 13:12)

Traditionally, the season of Lent is understood as a time to "give things up" in order to make more space for God in our lives. In many ways this spiritual discipline of self-denial can be a good thing. It can take the focus off ourselves, make us more aware of the needs of others and help us grow closer to God. But this Lent as we look back on two years of pandemic time and the many things we have given up because of it, maybe now as a people of faith we are being asked to NOT give up something. Maybe God is asking us to not give up hope.

These past couple of years have been hard on hope. Hopes have been dashed and many have become discouraged, angry and very cynical. "I am done!" or "I am done with this!" are words I have heard time and again and if I am honest with myself, have even entertained them in my own thoughts. It's the sense of tired frustration that accompanies things not going my way. One ends up being afraid to hope because they have been wounded by hope. Ones who, as Solomon puts it in Proverbs 13:12, have had "hope deferred." Have had promises go unfulfilled or expectations unmet. A deferred hope is to have our passions yield more sorrow than joy. The wisdom writer said, "Hope deferred makes the heart sick."

A sick heart is a heart that feels it has been injured and ignored. It is a heart that is blinded and cannot see past the shadows created by the loss and shame. A sick heart caves to the pressure when hope has been postponed for far too long. A sick heart gives up on hope.

Hope does not "spring eternal" as some may be led to believe. We live in a broken world filled with broken hearts. Yes, it is a world that God loves, but it is a world that often hopes for so much less. We know this because a fully redeemed world would offer an endless supply of optimistic anticipation. Unfortunately, life becomes a mixture of joy and pain. There are moments when our hearts are full and hope flourishes and other moments when upsetting realities overcome us and hope languishes.

The danger in this present moment exists in how this pandemic has led to a lot of people languishing in the shadows for an extended period at the same time.

For some of us, we have been disappointed one too many times. The pain to hope has grown too difficult and our sick hearts can begin to believe the fatal lie that says, "the risk of hoping is more costly than the haven found in never hoping at all." This is a misguided turn that deceives us. It causes one to give up on passion, desire and all that offers life. Cynicism becomes a way to cut hope off at the roots -before I can ever be disappointed. Acquiesce to the belief that what we are is all we will ever be, and settle in for a safe, shallow and utterly empty consumer-like existence. Like Snoopy once mused in an old Peanuts cartoon, "Yesterday I was a dog. Today I'm a dog. Tomorrow I'll probably still be a dog. Sigh! There's so little hope for advancement."

Solomon concludes his proverb with a challenge to the cynic by going on to say, "but desire fulfilled is a tree of life." The prescription given for a sick heart of disappointed hopes is to know desire, make room for it and hope for it. To hope for and desire God. To hope as followers of Jesus. To hope as a church. To hope for the world as God does in Christ. Yes, it's dangerous and there will be disappointment -the cynics will always abound. But it is the only way to life -to truly live.

You see, this is the way of Jesus, the one whose desire for us walked a road of great hope that intersected with great disappointment to show the way to life again. He gives us a way to live again. Lent is here. We are getting back to church. I am NOT giving up hope for Lent.



"...but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life."

—Proverbs 13:12

SHROVE TUESDAY

TUESDAY MARCH 1

WHAT IS SHROVE TUESDAY?



Shrove Tuesday is held on the day preceding Ash Wednesday. It signals the end of Epiphany and the beginning of Lent and occurs precisely 47 days before Easter. Its name is derived from the term 'shrive', which refers to the ritual of confession for sins leading into the penitential season of Lent. It is a day of both spiritual preparation and celebration. As a day of spiritual preparation, it is viewed as a time for cleansing the soul from sinful appetites through confession and submission to the Lord. As a day of celebration, it is the last opportunity to do so before the Lenten season begins. It is marked by a forty-day fast (or abstinence) from certain foods and practices. Therefore, Shrove Tuesday is the last day to feast on foods (e.g., meat and fish, fatty foods, sugars, eggs and dairy) traditionally prohibited during the fast. Shrove Tuesday has a variety of rituals and customs associated with it. It is popularly known as 'Pancake Day' or 'Pancake Tuesday' because observers eat pancakes made from the rich foods (e.g., eggs, milk sugar) not permitted during the Lenten fast.

Each year, Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. In 2022, Ash Wednesday falls on March 2. Ash Wednesday focuses the Christian's heart on repentance and prayer, usually through personal and communal confession.

ASH WEDNESDAY

WEDNESDAY MARCH 2

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

FRIDAY MARCH 4

The World Day of Prayer dates back to the 19th century when Christian women initiated a variety of cooperative activities in support of women's involvement in mission at home and in other parts of the world.



International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women, and marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. Marked annually on **March 8th**, International Women's Day (IWD) is one of the most important days of the year to:

- celebrate women's achievements
- raise awareness about women's equality
- lobby for accelerated gender parity



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

TUESDAY MARCH 8

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

MONDAY MARCH 21

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination recognizes that injustice and prejudice fueled by racial discrimination take place every day. Observed annually on March 21, it commemorates the day police in Sharpeville, South Africa, opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration against apartheid "pass laws" in 1960. This year's theme, "Youth standing up against racism", aims to foster a global culture of inclusion and anti-discrimination and recognizes the work that youth across the country and the world are doing to stand up against racial prejudice.

EAST DARTMOUTH CHRISTIAN FOOD BANK

2021 Board of Directors Report

As vice chairperson I am pleased to report on the operation of the East Dartmouth Christian Food Bank for 2021. As previously mentioned, our Chairperson, Ian Ferguson passed away in early January 2022. We as a board acknowledge his strong commitment to the Food Bank's ongoing work and ministry within our community. We miss his dedication and wisdom.

2021 was a year of challenges and successes over-arched again by the shadow of Covid-19. With the strong leadership of our coordinator Shaureen Taweel and a small band of committed volunteers approximately 3600 souls were fed representing 1500 households. Many of these folks are repeat visitors, coming often to the Food Bank through the year. These numbers reflect a problem with food insecurity within our community. Again in 2021 we allowed people from outside our boundaries to access the Food Bank as many organizations have suspended operations due to Covid or ceased operations completely.

We have had successes: The Board has used this time and positive funding to purchase a new commercial see-through refrigeration unit, mobile shelving and more cafe carts. These purchases allow for better storage and inventory control and the ability to move product easily and in a safe manner to clients, protecting both clients and volunteers. Our positive bank balance has also allowed Shaureen to offer more food and protein to clients in each order. Once again in 2021 we were able to self fund our insurance premium and suggest to supporting churches the usual funding they supply each month could be put on hold as the board is aware Covid -19 has put a strain on many church's balance sheets. We see that continuing in 2022.

The Food Bank has again appreciated the ability to be housed in the "Heritage Centre" on the property of Woodlawn United Church. The ample parking lot and clean cared for premises allows our volunteers to meet clients in a safe manner and adjust our operation as needed. We thank Woodlawn United for continuing to share with us this space.

The year 2022 will bring its challenges, some new, some familiar:

Covid-19 will be part of life with new forms and restrictions, increased costs of food and non food items, food shortages and supply issues. But whatever the circumstance I assure you the board along with the support of the five sponsoring churches will continue to be committed to help people with food insecurity in our community.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian Moors,
Vice Chair
East Dartmouth Christian Food Bank



FRIENDS OF ACCESSIBILITY

MARCH CHOWDER!

The Friends of Accessibility Team wish to thank all those who supported our four Fish Chowder Takeout Luncheons during the fall and for their patience these past two months as we have struggled with the decision to hold a Jan/Feb winter chowder due to the continued challenge of Covid. With the ease of some of the restrictions, we are hopeful and optimistic that we are turning the corner on Omicron, and will be bringing you a Chowder in March. So, on that note, mark your calendar for **Saturday, March 5th 11:30 AM—1:00 PM.**

If you are able to donate a pie for our Chowder, please drop off an Apple or Pumpkin pie by 2:00 PM on March 4th and please let Ralph know 902-434-7786.

The increased cost of ingredients over the past couple of years have forced us to increase our price to \$12.00 per meal. This includes your delicious chowder, roll, and dessert (pie). The Order desk is now open! All orders should be sent to ralphsams@ns.sympatico.ca or call 902-434-7786. The order form is attached to today's email. Order deadline is Tuesday March 1st at 8:00 PM.



COUNTRY CLASSIC SHOW

We were to host our first afternoon Country Classic Show in January but that show was cancelled due to the Omicron variant impacting on our gathering restrictions. The same thing happened in February. Our next show is set for Sunday March 20th at 2:30pm. This show will feature the Sidewinder Band with hostess Wendy Manning with guests to be announced later.

We are moving to this time slot to enable folks, that do not drive at night, an opportunity to enjoy a concert and an afternoon out.

We look forward to getting back to enjoying in-person activities and events! We will send out an email at a later date about tickets, once we know that the show will go on, on March 20th.

Sincerely—Ralph Sams

It was one
of those
March
days when the sun shines hot
and the
wind Blows cold:
when it is summer in the
and winter in the *light,*
shade.

~Charles Dickens

Celebrating You!

Are you celebrating a birthday, anniversary or other special occasion, and would like to share that with your Woodlawn United Church family? We would love to celebrate your special day with you. Please call (902) 434-8302 or email office@woodlawnunited.ca with your birth date information or your Anniversary date, and we will publish that in our weekly bulletin. There are many other special celebrations to share such as a graduation, adoption, marriage, birth of a child, retirement, purchase of a new home, perhaps you have received a special award, or received a job promotion. We would love to celebrate you by recognizing your special occasion, because your Woodlawn family cares about you.

Transition Team Update

Dear friends of Woodlawn United Church: Your Transition Team wants to thank you for your continued prayers as we do this work together. With the latest Omicron wave now upon us, some of the “in-person” work that the team had hoped to pursue early in 2022 must now wait. In the meantime, the team has decided to focus more on the work of governance and will be seeking input from the various committees of Woodlawn UC via Zoom conferencing in the weeks ahead. The team does feel this governance work is timely, especially given the way things have continued to evolve through this pandemic time. As committees and groups continue to adjust and adapt to the new realities we now face, it is expected that any changes to the governance system will be ones that will address these changes and support the ongoing mission and life of Woodlawn United Church.

A PRAYER FOR A TIME OF TRANSITION

Loving God, You know us better than we know ourselves. Guide our Woodlawn Family through this period of transition. Times of change are challenging for all, the team, the congregation, and ministers and we all have a role to play. We need Your wisdom that we might be receptive to change, conversion and growth.

Empower each one of us to use our unique gifts to create a beautiful life, to share openly our thoughts, to respect the opinions of others, and to encourage humility, patience and joy. Do not allow fear, ignorance or pride to limit the work of your Spirit. Instill in us a vision of the life You intend for us to lead. Guided by Your Holy Spirit we will be united in love and joyfully accomplish this mission, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessings from:

Rev. Dr. Dale Skinner, Shirley MacLeod, Emily Masse,
Jerry Jackson, Teri Giannou, Elaine Gray & Rev. Susan
Chisholm

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE LENTEN ONLINE STUDY GROUP

Restorative justice is a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by the conflict brought about through criminal behaviour and wrongdoing. It is a proven process that can lead to transformation of people, relationships and communities.

On Tuesday evenings through the season of Lent, Rev. Skinner will be exploring the topic of Restorative Justice using the series “Steps To Reconciliation.” No prior knowledge is required and anyone is invited to participate. We will be meeting via the Zoom video-conferencing platform.

The study will begin Tuesday, March 8 at 7:00 PM and will conclude on Tuesday, April 12. There will be no meeting on Tuesday, April 5. If you are interested in attending, please pre-register by emailing Rev. Dale Skinner at: dale.skinner@woodlawnunited.ca



GENERAL COUNCIL 44

The General Council of the United Church of Canada is the Council of the United Church of Canada responsible for decisions that impact the denomination on a national scale. This year the 44th General Council (GC44) will take place in 2022 fully online, commencing in February and ending in August.

For the latest news, information, and draft agenda visit the 44th General Council website at: <https://generalcouncil44.ca/>

The theme for the General Council is based on Jesus's question to his disciples: "Who do you say I am?" (Matthew 16:15). The logo features a cross curving around in an arc, creating a circular movement and merging into Jesus' hair. The organic shapes that form Jesus' hair suggest foliage, something growing, part of a landscape. The shading in the face forms a gaunt cheekbone that echoes the shape of a chalice.



We are asked a question, and the part of the face we can see looks directly out at us inviting a response. The expression is direct and serious but serene. As we explore our response to Jesus' question, we are then challenged to know it, tell it, and live it. "Who do you say I am?" has been translated into French and the language of the Stoney Nakoda peoples.

ZOOM BASICS



Of the many ways our world has changed through this pandemic, the now widespread use of the Zoom video-conferencing platform is one of them. In order to maintain connections and engage in the world around them, many have overcome some of the challenges created by lockdowns and distancing by choosing to adapt and learning how to use Zoom. Zoom has definitely become a part of life at Woodlawn. It is now used by many committees and groups as a way to connect and continue the work and life of the church.

There are many tutorials available on the internet that can help us become more familiar with Zoom. Here are a couple that were created by the Alzheimer Society of Waterloo Wellington:

This is a brief video explaining how to setup a free Zoom account on your computer.

[How to Setup Zoom - YouTube](#)

This video explains how to join a Zoom meeting.

[How to Join a Zoom Meeting - YouTube](#)

A video explaining how to connect using Zoom on a smartphone or tablet.

[Zoom tutorial-How to join a zoom meeting from your phone or tablet - YouTube](#)