



October Newsletter

Woodlawn United Church



give thanks

GRATITUDE PRAYER - Rev. Mary Lynne Whyte -

God of the Harvest, Creator and Sustainer of life on this earth, we praise you and give thanks. We are thankful for seeds and soil, sun and rain, and the miracle of growth that only you can provide. We thank you for farmers that dedicate their lives to producing food through their knowledge and skills for we know that you care for us through their ongoing efforts.

Now that fall has arrived, we give thanks for cooler temperatures that are such a relief from summer heat. And we thank you for fall colours evident in foliage, flowers, and produce that delight our senses in so many ways. What a marvelous gift to experience the texture of vegetables and fruits, raw or cooked; to taste the flavours of fall. And to top it all off, we receive the nutrition they provide for our bodies. Your abundant gifts of harvest such as golden grains, rosy red apples, and orange pumpkins delight our senses.

For all these things and more, we are thankful, for all your gifts of love not only amaze us, they bring us comfort and assurance that we are not alone. We live in your world, O God, and we are blessed to be a part of it.

We pray this with thankful hearts in the name of Jesus.
Amen.

COVID PROTOCOL UPDATE

Wondering what Woodlawn will look like as we hopefully get ready to move into Phase Five of the province's reopening plan on October 4th? Here is some of what you can expect when coming to Woodlawn.

1. Masks will continue to be mandatory except for those with a valid medical exemption.
2. When coming to worship, one side of the sanctuary will be un-distanced seating (with masks) and a portion of the sanctuary will be reserved for those who wish to be masked and distanced.
3. There will be singing and responsive speaking (with masks).
4. An assurance to parents that anyone working with our children will be fully vaccinated.
5. We take very seriously the call to be a welcoming church yet also take very seriously the continuing health and safety of everyone in our congregation - especially the most vulnerable. Therefore we suggest that anyone participating in "LIVE" worship at Woodlawn should be fully vaccinated. Otherwise people are still welcome to participate by video and livestream.

In order to reduce the number of times people may be required to show proof of vaccination, Woodlawn members are invited to email proof of vaccination or drop by and show it in person to the Church office in order that we might have a record on file. Thanks for your cooperation and understanding as we work on getting "Back to Church!"

GIVING GRATITUDE ITS DUE

By Rev. Dr. Dale Skinner



A few years ago, the Greater Good Science Centre at the University of California launched a multi-year program known as The Gratitude Project. The people at the Gratitude Project noticed that the words “thank you” had become so commonplace they weren’t always taken seriously. The scientists also noted how in the western world, rising individualism and a culture of entitlement had brought a decrease in wellness. People were feeling more anxious and isolated (and this was before the pandemic). Their research showed that when gratitude is fostered and cultivated it leads to wellness. Gratitude builds stronger immune systems and lowers blood pressure. There are higher levels of positive emotions things like joy, optimism and happiness. It lessens the feelings of isolation and loneliness. People act with more compassion towards others.

Robert Emmons, perhaps the world’s leading scientific expert on gratitude has a theory as to why this is the case. He says, “Gratitude is an affirmation of goodness. There are good things in the world, gifts and benefits we’ve received. Because they are received we recognize that the sources of this goodness is outside ourselves. Other people—or powers beyond us, have thought enough of us to give us many gifts, big and small, to help us in our lives.” Gratitude strengthens our relationships with others because through it we see how we’ve been supported and affirmed by others. It is a part of a memory of humankind that crosses religions, cultures, languages, ages and lifetimes. It truly is spiritual.

As Christians, we should appreciate how this science of gratitude affirms the ancient wisdom of our traditions. After all, the scriptures give gratitude serious attention! Time and again God’s people are reminded to take this deeply spiritual work of thanksgiving seriously. Not because God expects it or thinks it is deserved, but because of what it means to the wellness of humans. The book of Nehemiah, notes how God’s people were obligated to contribute to the daily portions of the ones who brought forth songs of praise and thanksgiving to God.

The ones whose job was to give thanksgiving were of such value they were seen as doing a public service.

Thanksgiving was considered vital to social wellness. Maybe that’s what we need in our governments, a Department of Gratitude. Thanksgiving even has its own category in the Psalms. Scholars have noted there are five types of psalms. Psalms of praise, wisdom, royal, lament, and **thanksgiving**. Some also say the same when it comes to prayer. There are four kinds of prayer: prayers of adoration; prayers of contrition; prayers of supplication; and prayers of thanksgiving. The apostle Paul advised Christians (1 Thess. 5:18) to be thankful in all things. While Jesus, full of God’s Spirit, ate, drank and slept gratitude, Jesus always gave thanks and said a blessing before a meal. He gave thanks to the one he called his “Father in heaven” for his followers and friends. Jesus reached out and provided for others in such a way that he moved people to gratitude time and again.

The wisdom of our faith reminds us that Thanksgiving isn’t just something we do or give. Thanksgiving is itself a spiritual gift. A practice we receive and share. It is a sacred energy. A movement of the heart that gives life. When we are open to this gift of the Spirit we experience greater joy in our lives and in our relationships with God and one another.

May we be ones who emphasize the giftedness of life. Name and celebrate the free gifts of God. Celebrate the gift of Thanksgiving itself. May we be blessed with enough faith to stop and say “thank you” because our heads and our hearts know what these words mean for us all.



GRATITUDE ~ The list of things I'm thankful for is ridiculously long, but I think I'm most grateful for my foundation of good mental and spiritual health. Being intentionally grateful is one of the main ways I can maintain that good health. Sometimes it's easy to lament the lack of hours in the day, and begrudge there being no time for "me". At the same time, there are times where I'll spend 30 minutes scrolling my phone, or an hour watching tv. Tuning into those moments, being grateful for the choice and owning the decision to be there makes it easier to actually absorb the relaxation that comes with that time, instead of letting them pass by. So while I'm grateful for my mental health, I also believe living with gratitude supports my mental health.

- Emily Masse

UPCOMING GRIEF GROUP

On Tuesday nights in November from 7pm-8:30pm in the Woodlawn sanctuary, I will be leading a group that will explore the topics of grief, loss and lament. Who is this for? It is for anybody. Why? Because we all experience grief, loss and lament in our lives.

Whenever and wherever there is change, there is loss. These losses come in all shapes and sizes. It could be the loss of a job. Maybe someone has moved away. Maybe a relationship has ended. Maybe a child has begun school. Maybe life has changed since Covid. Perhaps you have retired. Or maybe, you have suffered the loss of a loved one - a spouse, a partner, a child, or a close friend.

For five evenings, beginning on November 2nd, I invite you to come and learn more about grief, loss and lament. It may be helpful not only for you, but it can equip you to help others. If you would like to register, please contact the church office by October 25th, by phone, at 902-434-8302 or email office@woodlawnunited.ca. We will be using a small book, "Experiencing Grief" by H. Norman Wright as a guide. The cost of the book is \$6. I will have some books available for purchase or you can get your own. Please let me know if you would like a book when you register.

I hope you can come. Rev. Dale



Volunteers are still needed in the following areas:

Tech Support: Woodlawn United is looking for tech savvy individuals to help with Sunday worship (and a few other services through the year). It's one of the best places in the church for people with more technical minds and skills to put their time and talent to good use! This individual would have a comfort level around software, hardware, and Audio/Visual equipment (run the sound board and screen projection for video, etc) as well as computer files. This role is typically not demanding, with a need of just a few hours per week (on average). Because this is a shared role, our tech team members take turns running the show. If you're tech savvy (or willing to learn), creative, and organized, please reach out to Paul Whyte at epaul.whyte@gmail.com.

Sunday School: Do you have a little free time to offer? Woodlawn United Church is seeking a volunteer Sunday School Superintendent. The role of the SS Superintendent is to plan for the general administrative, curriculum, and ministry needs and goals of Sunday School programs. This role will work closely with the Sunday School and Youth ministry teams, and will require a minimal weekly/monthly time commitment. Lisa Allen invites interested persons to contact her at (902) 292-1382 or by email lisa.allen@dal.ca so that she can share more details about this important role. Thank you.

GRATITUDE ~ "I am grateful for folks with wonderful minds who share their thoughts, whether in word or print, from whom we can learn much."



- Mary Osborne

ENGRAVED BRICKS



These are a great way to pay tribute to a loved one, either deceased or alive. We are assessing the level of interest to see if we can make the minimum order of 12 bricks. If you have an interest or require more information please call Ralph Sams 902-434-7786 or ralphsams@ns.sympatico.ca

TRANSITIONAL MINISTRY TEAM UPDATE

By Rev. Dr. Dale Skinner



The Transition Team has been quietly and not so quietly at work since Rev. Dale was appointed as an Intentional Interim at Woodlawn for this phase of our congregation's life. The Team has been meeting twice monthly, spending some time getting

acquainted, reviewing the Transitional report and goals and doing some important preliminary work that are a part of the process tasks associated with Transitional Ministry.

Some of the initial process work of Transitional Ministry is to spend some time focusing on History and Identity. In keeping with these processes, you the members of Woodlawn were asked to share stories about your Woodlawn experiences that reflect your core values. This work on values is important work as it helps us all to better understand what makes us tick. Why does this matter? It matters because as studies have shown time and again and as most of us can attest -there is nothing more upsetting than when our core values are challenged and nothing more agreeable than when they are affirmed! It has also been noted that most of us are never truly aware of our core values. We never really talk about them. However, to know them can lead to greater understanding of differences and lead to wellness in our relationships. They can help us to avoid conflict or deal with it differently.

In churches, where there are many different people with their own core values, finding ones that we share in common can help to connect individuals to a particular ministry or mission that speaks to them. Core values when aligned to mission activities and decision making not only allow others to know who we are, but help us to know who we are and how we might best use our gifts for the greater good. Thanks to everyone who has submitted and to those who continue to share with the Team the core values that are important to you. We appreciate that this is personal information, but it can be life giving and can allow us to be true to one another and true as a church. This Transition Time will be a time when we together continually discern these values as they help to answer the "why questions" of what we do and the steps that are taken in addressing the various goals laid out for this Transitional time.

Other work of the Transition Team this past summer included leading the August 22 worship service. Transition Team member Emily Masse gave the message that day, and encouraged listeners to think about the different kinds of leaders and different kinds of gifts it takes to be the church. Taking stock of such people in our midst and gifts in ourselves is again a way to know ourselves better as a church and where we might see ourselves fitting into the life and work of Woodlawn. This is especially true as we consider what living out the goals derived from the Community of Faith Profile that were established in the Transition Ministry Report will look like.

As September arrived, a time when we would normally think about getting "back to Church" once again, we found this muted by the cloud of the pandemic that hangs over our heads. The Transition Team did set aside some time on a Saturday morning though when a small group of interested individuals gathered and spent some time connecting and sharing stories as we meandered through the different parts of the church buildings. We gave thanks for past ministries, prayed for the present ministries that have been impacted by Covid, and asked for guidance and inspiration for our future mission and ministry to the community around us.

Moving into October, when hopefully things will open up a little more, the Transition Team will be facilitating the first "Open Space" event. This event is (as the name implies) open to anyone who would like to come and contribute to the opportunities this time of transition offers. The Open Space event will immediately follow an abbreviated morning worship and last for approximately an hour and a half. We hope you will plan to attend. Refreshments will be provided.

*Hopefully yours, The Transition Team
Rev. Dr. Dale Skinner; Jerry Jackson; Teri Giannou;
Shirley MacLeod; Emily Masse; Rev. Susan*



THE TRANSITION TEAM OPEN SPACE

Sunday, October 17TH: Following Worship, "Open Space" This is a time when people are invited together to share, to learn and dream a little. A time to discover our passions and how we can support one another in ministry we share at Woodlawn United Church.

FRIENDS OF ACCESSIBILITY CHOWDER

Our next Woodlawn Chowder Luncheon will be on Saturday, October 30 and will be a drive through pick up again. An order form will be available closer to the date. Please provide us with the info asked for on that form, ie choice of dessert, rolls and pick up time. Things run much smoother when we have all the info first time. Many thanks to all who worked and to all who purchased September's chowder! It was a huge success.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 30, 2021

11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

WOODLAWN'S FAMOUS CHOWDER LUNCH

\$10.00

Will be served **TAKE OUT STYLE ONLY**

Woodlawn United knows Chowder!!

\$10.00 Includes Chowder, Roll, and Dessert

giftswith**vision**

GRATITUDE FROM "GIFTS WITH VISION"

The 2018 - 2020 "Gifts with Vision" booklet offered the support of farmers in Palestine to plant olive trees in the Palestinian Territories. Gifts given allowed Palestinian farmer Ahmad to plant 300 tree saplings on his family farm with the help of international volunteers. This olive grove will provide a stable income for his family and help feed his community. In his own words -Ahmad shows his gratitude - " Being on my land working and planting olive trees gave me hope for a better future It was also good for me and my family to share our story with the visitors who came to help us. We felt there are good people in the world who still care about others."

In planning your Christmas gift giving you can help more folks like Ahmad by picking up a copy of the "[Gifts with Vision](https://giftswithvision.ca)" catalogue from the book rack in the narthex, choosing a gift and sending in your donation in payment. It makes your Christmas shopping so easy and will show your care for those in need.

The new Gifts with Vision catalog is being launched in October. Stay tuned. Here's your link: <https://giftswithvision.ca>



Give a **gift**with**vision**

A Giving Catalogue from the People of
The United Church of Canada

choose
gifts
online!

giftswith**vision**.ca



GRATITUDE As I think about gratitude it's hard to know where to begin. I am grateful for where I live, my family, friends and church, to name a few. But I think the thing that I am most grateful for is my relationships. It is relationships that make all of the other aspects of my life gratifying. Some relationships teach me. Others bring me comfort, have my back. Others share fun and good times and memories. Each relationship brings something different to me and I value every one of them.

- Bev Wicks

OCTOBER

We wish you a very happy and blessed Thanksgiving! Wishing you the gift of faith and the blessing of hope this Thanksgiving day!

We gather on this day to be thankful for what we have, for the family we love, the friends we cherish, and for blessings past, present and future.

Happy Thanksgiving!

GRATITUDE I am very grateful for Dorothy who has stood by me for 65 plus years. I am grateful for our family. I am grateful for our Woodlawn Family. During the past 18 years I have been grateful for the Accessibility Team who stood by me on good days and not so good. I am grateful for the Friends of Accessibility Team. I am grateful for Dr. Strang and his team for their leadership and direction during covid. I am grateful each day for the opportunity to live another day in this beautiful world.

- Ralph Sams

GRATITUDE There are so many thoughtful and caring people in Woodlawn United Church especially in times of crises. For that I am most grateful.

- Myrna Morash



Woodlawn United Church's FALL CRAFT AND VENDOR SALE

The Tabitha Unit of Woodlawn UCW is pleased to announce that The Fall Craft and Vendor Sale will take place on **October 23rd. 9:00 am to 2:30 pm.**

Admission is \$2. We have many new and returning vendors.

We are keeping a very close eye on the COVID regulations and all regulations will be followed.

This is a great way to kick off your Christmas shopping! Grab a friend, and come on down. If you have any questions please contact Beth Udby at 902-434-4565.



Thank you to Syllas Boutilier for this fun contribution to the newsletter.

UCW ANNUAL TURKEY DINNER

Woodlawn United Church UCW Take out Turkey Dinner
on Saturday, November 13, 2021.

Tickets will be on sale late September.

Stay tuned for more information.

to come soon!



When you look at life through eyes of
gratitude, the world becomes a
magical and amazing place.

Jennifer Gayle



CELEBRATING THE EAST DARTMOUTH CHRISTIAN FOOD BANK AND ITS VOLUNTEERS

The mission of the East Dartmouth Christian Food Bank is to work with a network of community partners and volunteers to reduce food insecurity and build a healthier community. Many people depend on food banks, including the working poor, seniors, those on fixed incomes, people with disabilities, single parents, and students. Whether the need is caused by economic conditions, family emergency, or the loss of a job, we are here to help with this growing crisis in our community.

We are an association of five churches in the Dartmouth East geographical area. The churches involved in the day to day operation of the food bank are: St. Luke's Anglican, Stevens Road United Baptist, Iona Presbyterian, St. Thomas More Roman Catholic and Woodlawn United. A board of directors that is made up of two volunteer representatives from each aforementioned church leads our association. We provide food to individuals and families who make East Dartmouth their home.

Our volunteers from our five supporting churches play such a pivotal role in ensuring that people in our communities are provided with nutritious food. They are a blessing to the organization and we thank them for their spirit, their kindness, and their compassion towards others less fortunate. It's so wonderful to see them come out week after week and give of their time and talent, such important contributions, to serve others in need, and our program would not be what it is today without them. We want them to know how much we appreciate all the work they do to make great things happen!





WOODLAWN UNITED CHURCH OUTREACH

Woodlawn United Church embraces gender equality, race equality, social equality in our Community and welcomes all into our church family. Our Mission Statement is to provide an opportunity to support people who are less fortunate in a God centered way. With the support of the Congregation, Outreach puts Christian faith into action through the programs we support within our Community. Annually, the Outreach Committee continues to support important community programs, including:

Margaret's House
Phoenix Youth
East Dartmouth Boys and Girls Club
Camp Kidston
Brunswick Street Mission
Metro Community Living
Among Friends Social Club
Halifax Community Chaplaincy
and the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship club.
Assisted families in need.

The Outreach Committee engages within the social justice community through the Face of Poverty, United Churches of Dartmouth, United Way/HRM Anti-Poverty Initiative, and Dartmouth Community Health Board, Christian Relief and Development Coalition (Margaret's House), Phoenix Youth, and East Dartmouth Christian Food Bank Board. We hosted a workshop for representatives from United Churches in Dartmouth on some of the 129 Ideas for Action.

Outreach also carries out the annual Christmas White Gift program. This program's goals are to meet the needs of low income families in the area. We typically support between 20-30 families with groceries, a gift card for turkey (or other protein), and gifts. We also provided Shoe Boxes for Metro Non Profit Housing and for the Teen Houses, as well as Prince Andrew High School for students in need; Backpacks for the North Dartmouth Community Centre, and Brunswick Street Mission, as well as donations of mittens, scarves and hats.

If you are interested in getting involved with the Outreach Committee, and the work that we do to carry out God's work, please call the office.

GRATITUDE I am thankful for all the Covid measures being taken by governments, nursing home staff, and everyone in the community to protect the elderly like my 101-year-old mom. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

- June Rigden

GRATITUDE I have so much for which to be grateful. I am thankful everyday for my health and mobility. It allows me to look after myself, family and friends, contribute to society, and lend a hand to those in need. I am fortunate to believe in a higher power which helps me daily. Life throws curve balls and often there is no handbook, but I am never alone.

- Adelia Holloway

WOODLAWN UNITED CHURCH'S BOTTLED WATER POLICY

Water is a basic human right, and a gift of God. As stewards of God's world, we are called to work in partnership with God to protect all of creation.

Making water a commodity, by selling it for profit, is contrary to this principle. Once water becomes a commodity it is something that can be sold and owned which denies water to those who can't afford to buy it back. In addition, the sheer number of plastic bottles have proven to be detrimental to the environment.

Exception: there are situations when bottled water may be necessary. For example, people with sensitivities, medical issues or in times when tap water is unsafe or in drought conditions.

POLICY

Woodlawn United Church is a plastic bottled water free environment and anyone using our church buildings are asked to use refillable water bottles or glasses.