



**December
2016**

Volume 16 Issue 4

KEEPING IN TOUCH

"To know God through Jesus Christ, and to reflect God's love as the Church in a changing community and world."

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Well Advent has begun! Our Sunday worship services are starting with a Carol Sing each week, the garland is up, the tree is decorated and the Rainbow Club is almost ready for their Christmas Musical presentation. At home, we are a little slower. The wreath has been ordered for the door but inside we don't have any decorations out yet. The lights are up outside but we seldom remember to turn them on. We have talked about this year's Christmas card theme but we have yet to make any... in other words we are off to a slow start. Maybe it's because when you look out the window or even go outside it sure does not feel like Christmas is coming anytime soon. Will it feel like Christmas when it gets here? What does Christmas feel like anyway?

Well it should feel overwhelming.... not overwhelming because of long to-do lists of presents to buy and baking to get done but because of the gift God gives to the world in the birth of Jesus. It should feel hopeful..... not hopeful for more stuff to open on Christmas morning but hopeful that our generosity, our action, our words are helping to create a world where everyone has enough. It should feel peaceful.... not because we might have time off work or school but because we take the time to reflect on the paths of peace we are called to walk. It should feel joyful.... not because of the Christmas parties we go to but because we praise God through singing our faith in worship and through sharing ourselves in this faith community. It should feel like love.... love that is wrapped in generosity, kindness, justice, reconciliation, companionship, inclusion, acceptance....

So as we move through Advent and into Christmas, as a church family, may we feel overwhelmed by God's great and generous gift to the world.... the gift of Jesus whose way of living taught us all to be a people who feel and share the gifts of hope, peace, joy and love in our world today!

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Merry Christmas,
Andrea Wheaton, DLM
Minister of Word, Sacrament & Pastoral Care

If you would like a copy of this newsletter emailed to you, please contact the church office.



Next Newsletter
March 2, 2017

From the Minister of Justice and Outreach**Dear Friends**

I love the season of Advent! I love all the things we do during this season to help prepare for the birth of Jesus. At our house, some of those things include making sugar cookies from an old recipe card written over 60 years ago in the fading handwriting of my mother, choosing the largest tree we can find and then inevitably having to cut the top off because it won't fit in our living room, singing carols, and watching old Christmas movies. We also take time in the deepening darkness of shorter days and longer nights to remember Christmases long ago, and loved ones no longer with us, and the many places and people for whom the darkness is overwhelming. And then we light candles to proclaim our belief in the One whose advent shatters the darkness, and who brings with Him gifts of light: hope, peace, joy and love.

The year 2016 is proving to be a year when the gift of light: of Christ's light, has been sorely needed. From the thousands and thousands of refugees desperately seeking a home free from war and famine and despair, to the growing concerns about climate change, to the election of a misogynous, racist man to the highest office in America, the deepening darkness has at times been overwhelming. Lighting a candle is an important symbol of hope in the darkness. It is a first step. But for us who are seekers of justice and lovers of kindness, there is more.

In the story of the Magi we are given a glimpse of what that "more" might look like. The Magi, you may remember, are the three wisemen who saw a very large, very bright star in the sky and decided to follow it, believing that it might lead them to a newborn king. It led them first to Jerusalem, and to a meeting with King Herod, who told them to let him know when and where they found the child. Then the star led them to Jesus. According to the story, the Magi knelt before the baby, worshipped him, and gave him their gifts. Then they did a very risky thing. Knowing that King Herod intended to kill the baby, they disobeyed a royal edict and returned home by another way.

Someone once wrote that hope has two sisters: rage and courage. In this post-election time, Advent hope shines through us when, to quote Sister Mary Jo Leddy, we "say to the darkness, 'I beg to differ'." In the actions of the Magi we are given a witness of what that can look like. But there are other things we can do as well: becoming proactive about safeguarding human rights and freedoms, walking in solidarity with our First Nations brothers and sisters, opening our hearts (and our doors) to people seeking refuge in our country. At Christmas we celebrate the coming of the Light into the world. We reflect that Light when we choose to birth hope and peace and joy and love into the world that God so loves.

On behalf of my family: Colin, Peter, Kayla, Claire, Ken, Gillian, Drew, Eloise and Findley, I wish you all the blessings of this sacred, light-filled season.

Merry Christmas!

Rev. Pat

Minister of Justice and Outreach

Executive Director, Open Hands United



Message From The Chair

As the season of Advent approaches and the Board is winding down another year – reflecting on our accomplishments and setting goals for the next year. I am so proud to see our many new members active and participating in the work of the church and changing the way we do things. Each new member brings with them a new perspective, a new set of skills and talents and it is so important that we find that balance between honouring the past and the things that make us who we are and creating the future.

One of the things we are trying to do on the Board is develop a large repertoire of opportunities so that members who have limited time to commit to the work of the church can still participate. Even if you only have one evening a month or one event a year that you can participate in, we want you to feel a part of this church and to feel vested in its success and growth. Any member of the Board would be happy to discuss ways to take your talents and interests and find a place where you can use them for the church.

Because of world events this past year, it would be easy to develop a new, deeper cynicism. There is a lot more hate and rage than we suspected in the world. But you can't fight hate with hate and you can't fight hate with fear. I believe you fight this growing trend by telling a different story and telling it loud. By modeling communities of love and caring where all, absolutely all, are welcome. There is unlimited room within the shining light of Christ's love and the more we welcome the safer the world becomes. Do not underestimate the message we are sending by being a part of this community. This is how we change the world.

Blessings

Cathy Manzato

Chair of the Board





Treasurer's Report November 2016 YTD

As the deadline for submission of this report was a week before closing the books for November, the financial results for the first eleven months of the year should be considered preliminary and subject to change. The total receipts were down slightly. While we have had strong increases in local giving and fundraising events, these have been offset by declines in facility rental and the Vista card program.

As of this writing, our expenses for the first eleven months of the year were up somewhat over last year. Most of this increase can be attributed to higher labour costs and equipment purchases.

The net result is that we have an operating deficit, compared to a surplus last year at this time. We have made great strides in reducing the deficit to this point. Most of this progress has been due to the tremendous support of our fundraising initiatives by the congregation over the past year. Our thanks to all of the volunteers who make this ministry possible.

Sincerely,

Alan J. McGee

Treasurer

Worship and Music Committee

Members: Andrea Wheaton , Miriam Oben, Marg Ralph, Katie Pergau, Bob Gill and Brenda McGee

The fun and festivity of the Victorian Tea, for our Burton family, marks the entry into the very busy, wonderful seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. Once again we ask ourselves, how did the autumn slip by so quickly? Certainly we had much to celebrate this fall, including a boisterous family-camp weekend at Sparrow Lake; outreach services by our Outreach and Truth and Reconciliation teams; new members being welcomed to our congregation; the Time and Talents Campaign wrap up; and Burton's 143rd Anniversary Sunday celebration. Yes, it's been a busy, faith-filled fall.

We have marked the end of this church year with The Reign of Christ Sunday service, including Holy Communion, on November 20th. This leads us into the joyful, busy Advent Season. In our beautiful sanctuary we will celebrate the coming of the birth of Christ through scripture, music, light, and the gifts of the Rainbow Club. White Gift Sunday Service will welcome unwrapped gifts and food to share with the Barrie community and a not-to-be-missed musical treat by our children and youth, Katie and friends, entitled "The Secret of Snowflake County". The gentle quiet of The Longest Night Service invites all who seek comfort during this hectic time to pause and gather on December 22nd. Finally, wonderfully, Christmas Eve will ring out the great hope and wonder of our Lord's birth with a Family Service at 5PM and a Candlelight Communion Service at 10 pm. Sunday worship on Christmas Day will offer a time of quiet merriment amidst a busy day. Come and share in this season of great anticipation and joy, one and all.

Respectfully,

Brenda McGee (Chair)

Sunday Worship- Looking Ahead

Nov.27th- Advent Season begins

Dec.11th - White Gift Sunday with musical by the Rainbow Club, "The Secret of Snowflake County"

Dec.18th - Lessons and Carols Service

Dec 22nd- Longest Night Service at 6:30PM

Dec.24th - Christmas Eve Family Service at **5PM** and Candlelight Service with Holy Communion at **10PM**

Dec. 25th- Christmas Day Service at 10AM

Jan.1st—New Year's Day Service at 10 AM

Welcome Reverend Jane!!!

Voluntary Associate Ministry is a formalized relationship between a ministry personnel and a local congregation. It is a provision to allow for appropriate exercise of ministry functions (such as celebrating weddings) on a voluntary basis. At her request and ours, the Rev. Jane Sullivan has been appointed by Living Waters Presbytery as a Voluntary Associate Minister here at Burton Ave. United. Jane and her family have been a part of our congregation for a few years now. Jane already volunteers in many capacities here at Burton Ave and we are blessed that she is part of our church family.



THE LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

Thursday, December 22, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

As days grow shorter, our spirits may sink.
As we feel the darkness growing deeper around us,
we may feel the difficulty that this holiday season can hold for us or others.

The anguish of broken relationship, the death of a loved one, the insecurity of unemployment, the weariness of ill health, the pain of isolation, financial struggles – all these can make us feel very alone in the midst of the celebrating and spending. We need the space and time to acknowledge our sadness and concern. We need to know that we are not alone.

Come out and join with others in this gentle service of
prayers, scripture, music and candle-lighting.
It is a time to acknowledge the presence of sadness, loss, struggle and despair
in the midst of a season of celebration.
It is a service of light in the midst of darkness.

Burton Ave. United Church
37 Burton Avenue, Barrie
705-726-0401

Truth & Reconciliation Committee

Members: Rev. Pat MacDonald, Julie McGonegal, Islay Scott, Jane Sullivan, and Sarah Jane Wetelainen

As the fall comes to a close, so too does our film series on the residential school legacy. Thank you to all of those who came out to the films and participated in thoughtful, stimulating conversations.

On October 22, I attended a meeting with the Moderator at the Toronto Conference office that gathered together witnesses to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Right Rev. Jordan Cantwell spoke passionately about the importance of congregations seizing this moment of openness toward the reconciliation process. Speaking out of her own experiences in apartheid South Africa and her recent travels to Aboriginal reserves throughout Canada, she addressed difficult topics such as white privilege, persistent conditions of poverty and poor health on reserves, and the challenges and possibilities of reconciliation. She advised witnesses on ways to move forward in changing the relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. Toronto Conference will host two workshops for witnesses in 2017: one on ways that congregations can actively work toward reconciliation, and another on how to acknowledge the traditional territory of Indigenous peoples as part of our regular worship services.

On October 23, Mission & Service Sunday, our group led a special service on the theme of reconciliation as a follow-up to our service in 2015. The service addressed the effects of residential schools on the past, present, and future generations of Indigenous people in Canada. We wish to thank Sarah Jane Wetelainen in particular for all of her work in preparing the material for this service.

As we look ahead to the future, we hope to find a way to incorporate an acknowledgement of the traditional territory into our worship service at Burton Ave. If you are interested in learning more about the reasons for the United Church of Canada's support of such initiatives, please visit:

<http://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/acknowledging-territory.pdf>.

Our vision for the future is one of supporting reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians in both symbolic and concrete forms. If you wish to join our group as we consider ways to implement this vision, please speak to one of our members.

Sincerely,

Julie McGonegal



Curling for Mission.

BAUC Open Hands is hosting a Curling for Mission on Sat. Jan 21 at the Barrie Curling Club. The fun begins at 6:30 and includes some instruction, a game of curling and appetizers. Grippers and brooms are supplied. Bring your friends and join us on the ice, or just come out and watch the fun. There will be a silent auction table and any donations will be gratefully accepted. Sign up will be in the New Year.



Rainbow Club

Well, another fall has flown by in Rainbow Club and we are getting excited about Advent and Christmas! On Sunday, December 11th the children will be presenting a White Gift drama and on Christmas Eve our traditional pageant (at the early 5 pm family service). We still need actors for our Christmas Eve pageant. They are non-speaking parts which we hope makes for a stress-free event for our young families. We will be doing lots of preparations and rehearsals over the next few weeks so we hope that our actors can be here on as many Sundays as possible.

We will be having our *"Happy Birthday, Jesus"* party on Sunday, December 18th during Rainbow Club. It should be a fun time of friends, food and fun.

Please note that our teachers are taking a well-deserved break on December 25 and January 1, so there will be no Rainbow Club on those dates.

Merry Christmas to Burton Avenue from the Rainbow Club and we'll see you again in the New Year!

Catherine, Marni, Lori, Sheena, Peter, Cathy and Angela

"And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another way."

Matthew 2: 12

Youth Inc

Youth Inc started this year on October 23rd with 23 youth ranging from grade 6 and up! We meet every two weeks and have had a Halloween costume party and begun work on our local mission for the year. The youth have been invited to help with the set for the Rainbow Club's musical and will have it completed Sunday, Nov 27th. We will be celebrating Christmas with a Christmas themed meeting on December 10th. We always have room for more youth and will be looking into setting up different age groups as it continues to grow in the new year.

*Blessings,
Kim Stoll*

Stewardship Report

As we begin a new church year with the coming of the Advent season, we look back at a very busy and rewarding fall season . Our fundraising initiatives generated the following revenues that our church uses not only towards our operating budget but also to accomplish the mission to which God has called us.

Progressive dinner- \$525.00

Time and Talent- \$5,105.00

Roast Beef Dinner- \$2,059.70

Presbytery Dinner- \$954.82

Victorian Tea- \$3681.82

Chili and Chowder-\$522.45

We celebrate our success in these events not only in monetary terms but also for the generosity of spirit in the giving of time, providing leadership and the sharing of fellowship.

The Advent season has us looking forward to the new church year with hope and expectation. The following events are planned for the coming year;

Sat. Jan. 21- Nica Curling Bonspiel

Fri. Feb. 3- Ham and Scalloped Potato Dinner

Fri. Mar. 3- Spring Fling Gala and Auction- "Canada 150"

Sun. Apr. 2 - Sun. Apr. 22- McGregor Meat Sales (Delivery before Victoria Day Weekend)

Mon. June 5- Nica Golf Tournament

Tues. June 20- Strawberry Supper

Fri. Oct. 27- Roast Beef Dinner

Sat. Dec. 2- Victorian Tea

Sun. Dec. 3- Chili and Chowder

Please add these events to your 2017 calendar.

The advent season prompts us to take stock of how we have grown in our relationship with God and God's generosity to us over the past year. Stewardship asks you to do this very thing in making a special Christmas Offering. The envelopes for that offering will be available in your bulletins on Dec. 18, Dec. 24, and Dec.25.

Wishing you all the very best that the coming season brings.

Brenda Young - Stewardship Committee

Outreach

“Go into the world and do well. But more importantly, go into the world and do good” – Minor Myers

Greetings from the Outreach committee! As I write this, I am thinking about the generosity of our congregation at Burton Avenue United and how happy 60 children from Samaritan House Ministries will be this Christmas as they open up their gifts that were lovingly selected by our members! The names flew off the tree this year, and that included an additional 10 names over the number that we had supported in the past. Thank you, thank you for your continued support with this yearly project.

And, the generosity of all did not end there, you brought in diaper and food donations for the Barrie Food Bank, blankets, sheets and food for Youth Haven, made sandwiches for the Busby Centre and generously supported Mission and Service with donations as well as volunteering to read the Minute for Mission. Thank you to all for your generous donation of goods and time!

This winter, our committee is going to make put together some “blessing bags” for the Busby Centre outreach to give to those on the street. We will be looking for donations of hand sanitizer, socks, wipes, toothpaste, small deodorants, gloves – small things that could be used on the street without easy access to water etc.

The sandwiches for Busby Centre will be continued this coming year, the sign-up sheet is posted in the foyer. Anyone wondering about food donations for the Food Bank and Youth Haven can keep in mind that the Food Bank has been low on mayonnaise and jams this fall, and Youth Haven is always looking for Kraft Dinner as it is a popular and easy meal.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all!

Devon, Lyla, Joan B., Joan C., Sarah-Jane and Reverend Pat.

The Secret of Snowflake County

On December 11, during our White Gift Sunday service, the youth of Burton Ave United will present their musical, The Secret of Snowflake County. Rehearsals have been going strong since late September for this musical endeavour and our kids are so excited to share their secret with you! Our Youth Group has been involved with dressing the sets, our Rainbow Club has been making props and costumes, and even some of our adults are getting into the set decorating fun. Tell your family and friends and make sure to be at church on Sunday, December 11, 10:00 am!!

Bravado Show Choir presents "Christmas at the Movies"

Mark December 2 or 3 in your calendars for the Bravado's "Christmas at the Movies" show. All performances are at Collier Street United Church. The evening shows start at 7:30 pm (doors open at 7:00) and tickets are \$25/person. Group rates are available for groups of 10 or more.

And for the kids, Bravado is once again offering their "Kid's Christmas" show on Saturday, December 3rd at 2:00 pm. Activities for the kids will be held in the lower basement, starting at 1:00 pm. Activities will include face painting, craft making, colouring, and songs. This is an afternoon for fun, music, and maybe even a visit from the big man himself....so don't miss it! Tickets are \$7/child under 12, \$18/adult, \$45/family of 4 (of any make-up).

Congregational Life

This year we had nice weather for our September barbeque at Miriam Oben's home . Alan was busy at the barbeque preparing burgers and hotdogs. We had a lovely assortment of snacks, salads and desserts which were enjoyed by the 30 adults and 7 children. Thanks to all for your participation.

Birthday cake was provided in October for those celebrating a birthday in Aug., Sept., or Oct.

A card party on Fri. Nov. 11 , was enjoyed by 32 people who gathered to play Euchre, Yahtzee and Settlers of Catan. Snacks and sweets and some prizes combined to make it a fun evening .

On Sunday Nov. 13 we welcomed by transfer :

- Carol Bartlett/ Carol and her husband Steve have lived in Barrie for twenty-three years and enjoy outdoor activities --walking and snowshoeing .
- Sally and Andrew Telford/The Telfords have a seven year old daughter Olivia (Livvy)They enjoy camping ,biking,swimming,ski-ing and running.

On Sun.Nov.13,our church celebrated its 143 anniversary. The congregation brought finger foods and an anniversary cake was also enjoyed at a social time after the service. Thanks to all who provided food and helped set up and clean up.

Lois Delaforce, Lynn Garraway, Linda Hudson, Barb McLelland and Nancy Sawyers.

Lifelong Learning Committee

During this Christmas season, the Lifelong Learning Committee paired up with Katie Pergau and Julia Johnston to host a craft session devoted to creating the snowflakes that will appear in *The Secret in Snowflake County*. Our committee will continue to host crafts downstairs throughout 2017 as a way of letting parents enjoy some fellowship time after service.

Summer feels very far away right now, but plans are already in the works to host our Vacation Bible School in 2017. We have chosen our dates (August 14–18) and look forward to welcoming Camp Awesome back again next year.

We will to continue to provide support to the many learning and educational activities in our church in the new year, including those offered through Rainbow Club, Youth Inc., the Women's Group, and more. In 2017, Julie will step down from the LLL committee, although she will continue to be involved in organizing VBS.

Our committee is always open to new volunteers, so if you would enjoy working with others to plan our camp weekend in September and to support the many ministries in our church, please speak to Lisa Edgar. Committee meetings are a lot of fun, and you'll feel gratified knowing that you are contributing in an important way to the life of our church!

Merry Christmas,

Julie McGonegal, Lisa Edgar, Brenda Marion, Briana Marion, and Meagan Cliche.

Burton Avenue United Church Facebook Page

Please feel free to invite your friends and family to like the page and join us at our events.

<https://www.facebook.com/BurtonAvenueUnitedChurch/>

We also have a private (secret) Facebook Group for BAU. The Facebook Group is for private conversation within the group only. If you wish to join the Group or for further info please contact the church office.

Church Parking Lot

There is a parking lot available off Cumberland Street directly behind the Unity School. There are a few steps up from this lot into our parking lot. If you are able to park there on Sunday mornings and during events it would leave spots closer for those who are unable to walk very far. This is especially important as we get more snow in the lot.

Pastoral Care Team

Our small group works together to ensure that there is regular contact made with those in our congregation who are unable to regularly participate in the life of the church due to health concerns. We gladly welcome everyone's help in letting us know when someone is in need of a visit. Contact the church office or anyone on the Team if you know of someone who is in the hospital or is ill at home.

Our team consists of *Linda Hudson, Lyla Hubbert, Joan Milligan, Miriam Oben, Al Scarth and Andrea Wheaton*