



**December
2017**

**Volume 17
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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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Advent! It is the season that begins a new year in the Christian calendar. It is a time of anticipation as we wait to celebrate the joy and wonder of Christmas. It is a time of waiting and wondering with great hope and excitement about what the new year will bring us and the ways we can bring hope to the world. It is a time perhaps to celebrate love that has been and is part of our lives and to re-commit ourselves to sharing the way of love with others. It might be a time to seek out a peaceful pause in the busy-ness of the world so that we can hear how God is calling us to be a people who are instruments of peace in our world. Advent is a time when we embrace the possibilities for the presence of hope, peace, joy and love in our lives no matter what the year ahead brings or where we find ourselves on our journey.

As I think about who we are as Burton Avenue United Church at the beginning of this Advent, I know that for some of us the past year has brought change while for others life has remained the same. For some, this will be a first Christmas after the death of a loved one while for others it is another Christmas when we so deeply feel the pain of missing someone. For some, this will be a first Christmas with a new child or grandchild or a new spouse or in-law, while for others it may be another Christmas when we feel the loneliness of being separated from family. For some, this will be a first Christmas enjoying a new home or at a new job, while for others there is a longing for change in our lives. For some, this is our first Christmas at this church, while for others we are grateful for all that this church has been for us over the years. No matter who we are or what life has been like in the past year, we can give thanks to God that we walk the journey together as followers of the Christ Child.

So no matter where it is we find ourselves at the beginning of Advent, throughout Christmas, as we journey through Lent and we celebrate Easter, during the day of and days after Pentecost and back to the next Advent, we can be assured that the God of hope, peace, joy and love is with us. As the church, let us share those gifts with one another and with the world so that the reign of Christ is born anew and forever!

*Blessings,
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.

Church Office Hours
Monday to Friday—9:30-12:30
705-726-0401



Letter from the Minister of Justice and Outreach

Dear friends,

When I was a little girl my mum and I made a Christmas creche for the mantelpiece in our living room. The figures were made of pipe cleaners and clothed in scraps of material from old pieces of our clothing: a red spotted square from my flannel pyjamas became a perfect cloak for a shepherd; a piece of blue satin from an old evening gown was draped beautifully over Mary's shoulders. Year after year I loved setting up our home-made creche in the stable my Dad made for us: angels and magi and shepherds with their sheep abiding, and Mary and Joseph gazing in adoration into the manger. The manger was always my favourite part! We made it out of a match box and the baby Jesus was made from a piece of Kleenex wrapped lovingly with twine. It was perfect, I thought: a beautiful representation of the birth of the Holy Child who brought the promise of hope, peace, joy and love into the world, and into our lives.

I often marvel at the wisdom of God, who chose to come to us in a baby. For who but a newborn child has the power to fill us with such hope, and peace, and joy, and love? Colin and I recently learned that each of our 3 children and their spouses are expecting a baby, and that we will have 3 new grandchildren born into our family in the next 6 months. To say that we are overjoyed is an understatement! The news fills us with hope. We feel renewed passion towards making the world a safer, more peaceful place. And love? Well, as I told someone recently, I don't have enough arms to hold three new babies, but I have more than enough love.

During this Advent Season, I invite you to reflect on where Christ's hope and peace and joy and love are being born in your lives, and on where you are helping each of these things to be born in the lives of others. As Andrea said in her powerful sermon on Sunday, we are the body of Christ, and it is through the actions of each one of us that others experience the presence of the Living Christ. There are so many people in need of the reassurance of that Presence: so much loneliness, so much pain, so much suffering. This is especially true during the Season of Advent, when the emphasis on family and joy and love are a painful reminder to many of what is missing in their lives. Which is why the birth of the Child is such important news for us to share in whatever way we can. We are called to BE the hope, peace, joy and love that comes to us in Jesus; to proclaim through our lives, the coming of the Light into the world.

Almost sixty years after my Mum and I made the Christmas creche, it still has a special place of honour on the mantelpiece in our home in Barrie. Whenever I look at it, I am reminded of the wondrous gift of the Child born to us so long ago. Perhaps the words of Isaiah 9 say it best:

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great Light.....For a Child has been born to us...and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace".

I wish you all the blessings of this Holy Season.

Merry Christmas!

Rev. Pat MacDonald

Message From The Chair

I had an experience recently that I felt worthy of sharing. My mother was hospitalized, unexpectedly and I was running back and forth from the hospital to her apartment to feed her cat and then home again, all with poor Monica in tow. On one of these trips I ran into Tom Leonard in the hallway of her apartment and I told him of my mother's hospitalization. "I'll feed the cat for you" he said. I had not asked – hadn't even mentioned the cat but he saw the need and offered and for the remaining days of her hospitalization I had just one visit to make a day.

My mother and I met Tom because of this church and he has become one of the many blessings in our lives due to our connection with Burton Avenue.

As it says in Mathew 22: 37-39 love God with all your heart and love each other. And in my mind that is the ultimate simplicity of everything I do for the church. I want to care for the people around me and I want to know that there are people who will care for me when I am in need.

Our church is in a growth period right now and we are grateful for that growth when so many churches are struggling to keep their members. But those of us who are involved in leadership cannot help but be concerned about how we will continue to care for each other. At the Board we are currently pursuing two initiatives to help with this. We approved participation in a pilot project (see page 5 for more info) that will provide additional training for our pastoral care team and others who wish to help us care for one another. We heard a proposal regarding the possibility of including a Parish Nurse Ministry in our portfolio.

As we move into a new Board year, I am hoping that we will be able to grow the Board just as we have grown our church. Running an event like the barbeque in September is one thing when you have 30 people attending something different when there are 100. We just need more hands helping.

When I look out from the choir loft on Sunday mornings at our constantly growing congregation it is awe-inspiring. I see a congregation laughing at the jokes, participating in the rounds, clapping with the music and when we needed help financially with the steeple repair, our members stepped up. There is something unique going on in this place – something that people want to be a part of and I cannot express how rewarding it is to be involved in creating and preserving that.

The love of God is limitless and the room in our sanctuary is limitless. All are welcome.

Blessings, Cathy Manzato



Christmas Concert & Cantata 2017 - "Night of Our Creator's Love"

Join us in the Sanctuary on Sunday, December 17th at 2:30 pm for an afternoon of music to get you into a Christmas frame of mind. Young members of our church will be sharing their musical talents on the piano, flute and voice to start our afternoon. Following this, our choir (with some special guest helpers) will be presenting "Night of Our Creator's Love", a beautiful and fun cantata, full of quiet musical moments, rousing choruses and some sing-along opportunities. Admission is by freewill offering, which will be given to the church's general fund. We hope that you can join us and add your voices to the sounds of Christmas."



Treasurer's Report November 2017 YTD

Our financial results for the first ten months of the year show total receipts of \$332,933 against total expenses of \$346,778, leaving us with an operating deficit of \$13,845. Over this same period last year, our operating deficit was \$12,202 based on total receipts of \$302,189 and expenses of \$314,390. Although the submission deadline for this newsletter was before closing the books for November, preliminary results show us reducing our operating deficit to approximately \$8,000, as compared to \$9,701 for the same period last year.

This improvement was largely due to the successful conclusion of the Get to the Point fundraising campaign which raised \$23,804 or 132% of our objective, as well as increased local giving of \$5,023 over the same period last year. Our goal for the next month is to reduce the operating deficit to zero. Thank you for your support of our mission at Burton Avenue United Church.

Alan McGee

Worship and Music Committee

Dear friends, despite the warmer temperatures we've enjoyed this month, the very busy, wonderful seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany are at our doorstep. It begs the question, how did the autumn slip by so quickly? Certainly we have had much to celebrate this fall, including a boisterous family-camp weekend at Sparrow Lake, a service to inform and inspire community and global service by our Local and World Outreach Committee, new members being welcomed to our congregation, and Burton Avenue United Church's 144th 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 26th. This leads us into the joyful, busy Advent Season. In our beautiful sanctuary we will anticipate and celebrate the coming of the birth of Christ through music, scripture, light, and the gifts of the Rainbow Club. Thank you to all who have ordered memorial poinsettia plants to grace our sanctuary through the last weeks of Advent. Our choir, under Katie's leadership, will perform a Christmas Cantata on the afternoon of Dec. 17th. The quiet of The Longest Night Service invites all who seek comfort during this hectic, festive time to pause and gather on December 21st. Finally, wonderfully, Christmas Eve will ring out the great hope and wonder of Christ's birth with a Family Service at 5PM and a Candlelight Communion Service at 10PM. Come and share in this season of great anticipation and joy, one and all!

Blessings, Brenda McGee (Chair)

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

Sunday Worship- Looking Ahead

Dec. 3rd - Advent services begin

Dec. 17th - Drama by the Rainbow Club at 10AM (bring food bank items for the Barrie Native Friendship Center and an afternoon Christmas Cantata at 2:30PM

Dec. 21st- Longest Night Service at 6:30PM

Dec. 24th- 4th Sunday of Advent service at 10AM plus a Christmas Eve Family Service at 5PM and the Candlelight Service with Holy Communion at 10PM.

Dec. 31st - A service of story and song.



Rainbow Club

Well, another fall has flown by in Rainbow Club and we are getting excited about Advent and Christmas! On Sunday, December 17th the children will be presenting a Drama, and on Christmas Eve our traditional pageant (at the early 5 pm family service). We still need actors for both dramas. There are lots of non-speaking parts which we hope makes for stress-free events 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. Because Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday, we will be having a very important rehearsal during Rainbow Club that day for all that are involved in the family service. We get to see you twice that Sunday!

With these special services happening, we will be having our “Happy Birthday, Jesus” party early this year. It will be on Sunday, December 10th during Rainbow Club. It should be a fun time of friends, food and fun.

Please note that our teachers are taking well-deserved breaks on December 31 and January 7, 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

“Health and Healing Ministry”

At the end of September a few members of our Pastoral Care Team attended an Interchurch Health Ministries (ICHM) information forum. ICHM consists of congregations, community groups, agencies and individuals working together to promote a greater understanding of the relationship between faith and health among their members and the wider community. In 2018 ICHM is beginning a pilot project to explore, develop and evaluate ways congregations can enhance their Pastoral Care ministry with a “health and healing advocacy team”.

We hope to be one of the participating congregations in this project. In order to do so, we need to form a team of five to seven people, representing a cross section of the congregation. Together this team will participate in the onsite and online training sessions. This will include presentations such as *The Church as a Health and Healing Place, The Role of a Health & Healing Advocacy Team, Introducing Health and Healing in the Life of your congregation, The Spiritual Foundations of Health and Healing, Prayer and Healing, Discovering the Needs of Your Congregation and Community*.

We would begin in early spring of 2018 and conclude by year's end. The major time commitment will be in the late spring when we will do the onsite courses which will require at least two Saturday sessions from about 9:30 am – 4:00 pm. The online sessions will usually be about an hour to 90 minute webinars. We can meet together for the webinars or participate individually. There would be assignments/tasks associated with actual programmes we would initiate in the congregation over the next six months following course work.

So if you feel called to participate in this ministry please be in touch with Andrea Wheaton as soon as possible.

Message From Colin MacDonald

Nicaragua: October 30-November 6, 2017

I arrived safely in Managua where I stayed with Henry Vargas. Henry will be leaving on November 5 for the USA for a few months in order to raise funds for his ministry. He will be working in South Carolina. His daughters will go with him, and then they will stay on to continue their schooling. Henry is planning to open another school in another barrio in Managua. He does what he can, including opening a pizzeria at his place called "Ragazzi" that seems to be doing a good business; but money is always in short supply.

The flight from Managua to Waspam was good. I was met at the airport by Elizabeth Coleman, Pastor Nicasio Pressman and, of course, David Sujo. David had travelled by bus from Puerto Cabezas: about six hours due to the muddy roads and flooding.

At 6:00 p.m. we were at the Zinzendorf church with Pastor Pantín. The children did their welcome songs, and the pastor gave a good message praising God as well as Open Hands United for all the work that is being done. He wants all the people in Canada to know that God will remember their work in this corner of creation and will bless them.

On November 1, we went downriver in a panka to deliver the clothes that Burton Avenue United Church paid for. Our first stop was Sawa, a desperately poor village that had been underwater just a few days before. The leaders at the church had made a list of people who needed clothes, and it was understood that there would be one bag per family. The people didn't understand, and some started demanding one bag per person! Others who weren't on the list started rushing the leaders. There were some very disappointed and even angry people in the midst of that free-for-all! Quite uncomfortable!

The next stop was the village of Boom. Here, the bags were delivered to the people as they sat on benches in the church, and it went much better.

At the next village, which is called Andres, we were met by the pastor who told us that the people had been waiting for us all day, and had finally gone home! He accepted the five bags of clothes, and also mentioned that he would like a church bell for the steeple as that would be heard farther afield on Sunday mornings.

Finally, we headed to Kum where we would pick up the truck for the drive back to Waspam. Our pilot decided that we would land closer to the truck if he took us along a small stream. It was fine until we hit a sandbar and got stuck! We waded through the river and a swamp in order to reach land! From there we drove along the muddy and rutted road back to Waspam.

On November 2, David, Elizabeth, Nicasio and I drove to Bilwaskarma to survey the land that OHU has inherited. I took a number of photos and have written down explanations of the various buildings and trees on the property. There is a lot of work to be done, especially culling and pruning of trees, cleaning out the well, etc. We sent money in order to pay for a clean-up of the land. While there, we chatted about potential use for the property: a retreat centre for church groups; an agricultural school for local farmers; etc. The folks seem to want to leave it up to Open Hands to decide what's best.

Another thing I have learned (from Mike Jones of Birmingham, Alabama and also Kisalaya, Nicaragua) is that we will need permission from the local judge for any development on the land. We would also need to include the local Moravian pastor in any decisions. These are certainly good things to know!

In the afternoon, a meeting was held at the library in Waspam with the five local pastors as well as the leaders of the women's groups and the school board. Following are the issues that were raised:

- The Juan Hus church needs a new roof.
- The high school is in need of major repairs. The school board has suggested that, once the new elementary school opens in February, the young children could be in the building in the mornings, and the high school students could use the same building in the afternoon. According to the principal, the students are not very keen on the idea. According to Elizabeth, it is the principal who is not very keen.
- The bus that transports them to the school also needs some work as well as new tires. I suggested to David that Stephen, our driver in Puerto Cabezas, is an expert in buses and might be of some help.
- Another issue was the kiosk that the Moravian women are hoping to open. Open Hands received a proposal that put the cost at \$8,216.00 US, after another proposal that was around \$3,500.00. I asked about the discrepancy, and the women assured me that the higher cost was from someone who was "overexcited." I received a new proposal with the costing at \$3,369.77 (after their having received the \$1,000.00 payment from Patricia.) This certainly seems a more manageable figure.
- The new elementary school needs a security fence around its perimeter. A proposal has been received.
- As far as the cost of the new school is concerned, I gave the committee the \$5,130.00 US cash that I was sent with. The school board had borrowed \$6,667.00 US from Ruben Taylor to pay outstanding bills. This leaves a balance owing for the school of \$1,537 US. Elizabeth reported that this balance will be covered by the Central Moravian church in Waspam. Open Hands will likely be asked to help with the costs of painting, electricity, ceilings, etc. that still need to be done.
- Concerning the upkeep of the property in Bilwaskarma, I gave the committee \$386.00 US for the rental of a mower as well as the payment of a worker for three months. More money will be sent for the worker at the end of January 2018.

On November 3, Elizabeth, David, the principal and I visited the high school. The principal walked me through the needs of the buildings which are in poor repair. He also mentioned that he would eventually like to have a home built onsite where he might stay for security reasons. There were already two young men there that day who were overseeing the property. He repeated that the high school students were uninterested in attending the new school in Waspam in the afternoon. Later, Elizabeth said that it was really his idea that they stay at the high school because he was afraid of losing students due to the move. I asked what would happen, and she replied that if he didn't do as the board directed, he would be replaced!

In the evening, I preached at the Central Church. The crowd was small due to the ferocious rainstorm, and people from other congregations were unable to get out. The service lasted only one hour!! Through this whole time, I received a number of proposals and requests that I have brought back with me.

I want to thank Open Hands United for entrusting this trip to me. I am looking forward to being back with the folks downriver with the youth who will be going at the end of June 2018.

*Sincerely,
Colin MacDonald*

Stewardship Report

As we begin a new church year with the coming of the Advent season we look back and take stock of a very busy but not the usual fall season in so far as the Stewardship Committee is concerned.

Our fall fundraising initiatives would normally have included a Roast Beef Dinner and a general fall fundraiser to address any deficit in our operating budget. However, as you know, the spanner in the works was the need to address the urgent structural issues with the church steeple.

Thus the traditional fall fund raiser was sidelined in order to fund raise the money needed for the steeple repair through the **Let's Get To The Point** campaign and Burton Avenue responded with overwhelming generosity. You continued to give to the campaign knowing that we had reached our goal of \$18,000 so that as I write this, the total is \$23,600.

As we said when we began the initiative, any surplus would be applied to the operating deficit.

We cannot thank you enough for your generosity of spirit in giving to this project.

We celebrate not only our success in monetary terms but also in the commitment and giving of your time and talent. Our Roast Beef Dinner was a great success and whether you baked, cooked, cleaned up, served, shopped, peeled, planned, or came to eat a fine meal, you were part of that opportunity to give and we thank you.

The Advent Season has us looking forward to the new church year with the hope and expectation that the season brings and so it is with that feeling that we look forward to the following events in the new year.

Fri., Jan. 26 - Ham and Scalloped Potato Dinner

Sat., Feb. 10 - NICA Curling

Fri., Mar. 2 - Spring Fling

Fri., Apr. 27 - Roast Beef Dinner

Mon., May 28 - NICA Golf

Tue., June 19 - NICA Strawberry Supper

Fri., Oct. 26 - Roast Beef Dinner

Sat., Dec. 1 - Victorian Tea

Sun., Dec. 2 - Chili and Chowder

The Advent Season prompts us to take stock of how we have grown in our relationship with God and God's great generosity to us. In this season of giving of gifts, the season in which we receive the greatest Gift, we ask you to make a special Christmas Offering - a gift. The envelopes will be available in the bulletins and pews on Dec. 17 and the three services on Dec. 24.

Stewardship at BAUC wishes you all the joys and blessings of the Advent and Christmas seasons.

Brenda Young, Lynn Gerow, Alan McGee



Life Long Learning

Our committee has been fairly quiet since our awesome camping weekend in September. We were very happy to help Bob Clay organize a wonderful gathering on November 17. Thirty-eight people from Burton Avenue came together to share a potluck dinner and create beautiful Advent candle wreaths that will help us enter into this Christmas season. Special thanks to Bob for his vision, preparation and leadership at this event. He shared some interesting insights and handouts with ideas about how we can experience Advent together. Additional thanks to Warren DeBoer who prepared the amazing wooden bases for our centerpieces.

Hannukah Invitation – on Sat., Dec. 16 from 9:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. we are invited to Am Shalom Synagogue (767 Huronia St.) to learn about the Hannukah. Children up to grade 8 will be invited to a program to be part of a fun hands on learning while the adults and older youth will remain for a conversation with Jewish Teacher, Ira Schweitzer. The morning will end with the delicious treat of latkes. If you wish to attend, please sign up in the foyer after church.

We are looking forward to some exciting events in 2018! If you have any interest in joining our committee (which focuses on learning about our faith through community/family based events), please speak to one of us. Many hands make light work!

Nicole Masuda, Marni & Briana O'Brien and Lisa Edgar.



Administration

It is such a good feeling to have the work on the steeple all completed and even paid for. When the leakage began this year we were very concerned with all the possibilities facing us. Many hours have gone into the project from start to finish. Four companies were involved. The roofing company, then the painters, then the masons, and the company who helped us with the mechanical lift to allow all the trades to work safely at this high elevation, not a job too many people care to do. The mechanical lift has in the end saved us a bundle, because the alternative of scaffolding would have been about \$20,000 more for the duration required. And I should add that all the contractors who worked on the steeple have all given us very fair deals, basically of only labour and materials. And you have backed us up and donated the money to cover all the costs, even over and above. We hope that with these repairs behind us we can now look at our steeple and listen to the bell with pride and this important landmark will continue be a reminder to the community of our presence for years to come pointing upward to the One from whom all blessings come.

Other items have also taken place in the meantime. The snow clearing contract has been signed with Clarkson Property Maintenance, they served us well last year.

Several areas have been painted inside and outside, some of you may have noticed the change in a few colours.

Repair to the masonry trouble spots were looked after this summer, so the exterior is in a good shape in our opinion.

The furnaces have been looked over, so hopefully they will give us another winter season of trouble free service, but they are getting older and may need replacement in the future.

We hope that you may use the church facilities frequently this season with joy and pleasure, giving thanks for all we continue to have available.

Thanks to Barry and Lyle who have put in many extra hours this summer.

Warren De Boer, Chair

Congregational Life

Well December is here and it is still very 'green' outside but winter festivities are in the works at B.A.U.C.

In the Fall when we had our second summer, fun and lots of food were enjoyed by over 70 people of all ages at the home of Miriam Oben when our 'welcome back' Fall BBQ took place.

October was a very quiet month for our committee other than providing coffee, tea and sweets downstairs after Church each Sunday. It would be nice to see some different faces behind the table doing the serving. You would not be alone as someone from Congregational Life would gladly guide and assist you. Please give this some thought and speak to any one on our committee for more details.

October 29th the following new members were welcomed into our congregation: Eric and Marilyn Boone; Pat and Christina Gaines; Don, Kathy and Jody Lee; and Jane Rees. Cake was served at coffee time as part of the welcoming and celebration.

On November 3rd the Congregational Life committee helped Andrea organize our 'Newer to Burton' dessert night. There was lots of laughs had by all!

Looking ahead we will provide our usual soup and bagel luncheon (including dessert of course) right before the Annual meeting in February.

Keep your eyes open for details of a card party some time in February.

Keep warm, stay healthy and drive safe while enjoying the upcoming Christmas season as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Seasons Greetings from your Congregational Life Committee: *Lois, Linda, Janet, Lynn and Nancy*

World/Local Outreach

*“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion,
for God loves a cheerful giver.”*

2 Corinthians 9:7 – NIV

Merry Christmas from everyone on the Outreach committee! We certainly do have a congregation full of cheerful givers – thank you to all for your support throughout this year. As I write this, all 65 children’s names on the snowflake tree have been picked up and gifts are starting to flow back in. There will once again be some children with extra smiles on their faces thanks to your generosity.

It has been a busy couple of months as we had our Outreach Sunday service in mid-October, 10 more survival bags have been filled and taken to the Busby Centre, sandwiches have been made and also delivered to the centre, and donations of food and goods have been coming in throughout the year for Youth Haven, the Barrie Food Bank and Samaritan House.

Minutes for Mission are continuing and we’d like to also thank you all for your donations to Mission and Service that go to support all those wonderful organizations and projects. If anyone is interested in reading one of the minutes in the coming year, contact any one of us and we’ll add you on the list.

Upcoming our committee is planning on getting some warm clothes to donate to Barrie Out of the Cold to help make things somewhat more comfortable for some of Barrie’s citizens that are surviving on the streets. We will also be donating some money towards the youth in our church that are participating in the Youth mission to Nicaragua in 2018.

We have been working with the Barrie Native Friendship Centre to assist them this year with their Christmas Drive and hopefully help fill their Hunger to Hope Food Locker. Working with this organization we can hopefully help reach more of those less fortunate that aren’t reached through the other organizations that we work with. Watch for items most needed to be listed in upcoming Banners and bring your donations on Sun., Dec. 17.

Thank you all again!

Devon, Joan B., Joan C., Lyla and Reverend Pat



THE LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

Thursday, December 21, 2017 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 Avenue United Church
37 Burton Avenue, Barrie
705-726-0401 www.burtonavenueunited.com

Everyone is welcome.
The short service will be followed by a brief time for light refreshments and fellowship.