



March  
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Issue 1

# 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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I am writing this after a morning filled with life-giving moments. From the time I entered the church building I heard, felt, saw, touched, and experienced a community that is life-giving. Two people in the foyer getting to know one another, one who has been part of our church for awhile, intentionally reaching out to someone who is newer... that is life-giving. A visitor from the Barrie Native Friendship Center speaking about the importance of the Hunger to Hope program for addressing the gaps in access to good healthy food, and what a difference it makes to them to know we care... that is life-giving. The youth and their leaders sell out of baked goods in support of the Hunger to Hope program... that is life-giving. Watching the faces of our children as they listened so intently to a story about everyone counting in the church and then hearing them sing *I Am the Church* with such energy and enthusiasm... that is life-giving. New and returning Board members, staff, ministry personnel and the congregation making promises to faithfully lead together in the coming year... that is life-giving. Rev. George Moore, in speaking about Affirming Ministries, shared his personal story of knowing what it is like to be kept outside the circle of acceptance in the church and yet still believes and celebrates that the good news of our faith calls the church, calls our church, to draw the circle wider through the Affirm process... that is life-giving. Prayer requests for strangers as well as for our families and friends, believing that our words and our open hearts make a difference... that is life-giving. The Minutes for Mission telling us how our donations help to create a radical welcome in camping ministries. Sharing laughter and songs, worries and fears, sorrows and celebrations..... that is life-giving.

All of those life-giving moments are part of sharing the good news of our faith with one another and with the wider-community. For the good news of the resurrection calls us into life-giving relationships with God, with one another here and with others. Those relationships can happen in worship or in the Rainbow Club, at the hospital or in the kitchen, at home or work, in Nicaragua or at the Barrie Native Friendship Center, in choir practice or a Board meeting, as we acknowledge the territorial land or as we wonder about being an Affirming Ministry.

Throughout Lent and as we move into the glorious celebration of Easter, may we bring life into the ordinary moments of every day, into celebrations we share, into the sorrows we feel, into the challenges we face, into all that we do as the church of Jesus Christ. Through every moment of our lives let us proclaim the good news that Christ is alive in our church, in our world and in us!

Church Office Hours  
Monday to Friday—9:30-12:30  
705-726-0401  
  
Newsletter Editor  
Edd Taylor

*Easter blessings*  
Andrea Wheaton, DLM  
Minister of Word, Sacrament & Pastoral Care



**From the desk of the Minister of Justice and Outreach**

Dear friends,

As I write this report for the March newsletter it is 16 degrees outside. The snow is almost gone and the buds are starting to emerge on the tree outside my daughter's home in Toronto. It's almost impossible to believe that a mere two weeks ago, when our Nicaraguan friends David and Elizabeth were visiting Canada, it was -20 degrees and Kempenfelt Bay was an endless vision of thick, frozen ice. For David and Elizabeth, the reality of winter in Canada was overwhelming. They couldn't get over the fact that in Canada you can walk on water (even if it is frozen!) or that your fingers and ears can get so cold that they feel that they might fall off! Nor could they get over the fact that in Canada, there are organizations like the Busby Centre and the Food Bank to care for those in need, or that you can step into an elevator on one floor and a few moments later, step out of the elevator on a different floor. Amazing! But even more amazing to them was the warm, gracious welcome they received while they were here. No matter where they went, whether it was to speak at a meeting of the Women's Institute, visit a school, hurl rocks down the ice at the curling event or offer worship leadership on a Sunday morning at Burton Ave, they were embraced by the community here. One of the things that touched Elizabeth most deeply was the lighting of the Unity Candle at the beginning of the service. The Unity Candle is a small white candle that sits on a piece of polished Canadian wood beside a Nicaraguan rock. Every week a child from the congregation lights the Unity Candle from the light of the Christ Candle, to remind us of our relationship with the Moravian Church in Nicaragua. For Elizabeth, this simple act was a profoundly moving affirmation that a relationship exists between our church and hers, and that across the distance of miles and time we are committed to walking together to do God's work of justice and kindness.

It's a relationship that is made all that more powerful because there is much that we in the United Church do not share with our friends in the Moravian Church. For one thing, the Moravian Church is much more conservative theologically and in practice than the United Church. Those of you who heard Elizabeth preach at the service on February 11 would be forgiven if you thought you had wandered into a Baptist church by mistake! Music is central to both our faith traditions, but we sound very different when we sing! In the Moravian Church, women always wear a head covering and a dress or skirt to worship. They never wear pants, either inside or outside the church. Most of the Moravian churches are full, while most of ours are not. They have worship services every day of the week, including 5 on Sunday. We would probably have a revolt on our hands if we tried to go that route! Many of the social issues we have addressed here in Canada are not yet on the radar in the Moravian Church in Nicaragua.

There are many differences between our two churches. Despite those differences, our friends in the Moravian Church welcomed us with open arms, and we responded in kind. We both chose to look beyond the differences and to build a relationship on what we do have in common: a deep love for God, a hunger to follow in the way of Jesus, and a commitment to seeking justice and loving kindness in God's name.

It's a good witness to hold before us as we move through the coming year. This year we are focusing on two specific justice issues: exploring the possibility of becoming an Affirming Ministry and responding to the teachings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to build Right Relations with our Indigenous brothers and sisters. It's an exciting time, and there are lots of discussions and workshops coming up this year to help us discern and respond faithfully to both issues. We may discover in our discussions that we do not all share the same opinions or ideas. It may be really difficult to find any common ground. If this happens, may the light of the Unity Candle remind us that God is our common ground, and that our call is not to be in the same place on any given issue, but rather to respect the differences while we find ways to walk forward together in God's name.

*Blessings,*

*Rev Pat MacDonald*

## Letter from the Chair

I treasure the people in my life who allow me to tell them about the books I'm reading. When a book has truly inspired you.....life changing, nothing-will-ever-be-the-same-inspiring you..... just have to share.

Recently the Women's Group allowed me to share such a book with them. Return of the Prodigal Son by Henri Nouwen is a very personal exploration of the parable from the perspective of each of the three main characters in the story. This was my first opportunity as a facilitator and it was outside of my comfort zone but I was excited to discover that many of the participants found this book as meaningful as I did. Drawing conversation was not an issue.

What moved me the most though was seeing participants actually change their minds through the study. People, including myself who had begun hating this parable, gradually through the author's exploration gleaned a better understanding of the passage and a new appreciation of its message.

What the book study taught us is the benefits of truly understanding others expressions of emotion – even the negative emotions like jealousy and resentment expressed by the elder brother - and that by meeting those expressions with love and understanding we could end the bitterness.

I have a co-worker who was in the middle of a self-imposed social media ban. "It's just so depressing", he had said. He gave it up because he found himself consumed by the number of friends on his page or the number of likes on his posts. Seeking acceptance and connection, he had actually gained neither.

But there are so many other ways that social media is just not a healthy environment for building connections. It leaves us surrounded by like-minded people. If anyone posts something of an opposing viewpoint, we just block them or write hostile, foul, unkind responses protected by the anonymity that our screens provide. We may be anonymous but the hurt caused is very real.

We got to the point in our conversation when we were talking about public-shaming and specifically a post on Facebook. A video of a woman who had left her baby in the car sleeping and run into a store. An angry mob surrounded her car and was physically not allowing her to leave the parking lot. They were right – she should not have left her baby in the car – but probably they did more harm by frightening her and her child than good by changing her mind.

How do we stop this I said? And he responded: "with community – communities are the answer."

Because community, real community are places where we can express emotions even negative emotions - even opinions that differ from others and still feel connected – still feel loved and understood.

As we journey through this time of change and growth at Burton Avenue, we need to remember what it means to be a community. It does not mean that we are all like-minded. It does not mean that we will think the same way or share the same gifts. It does mean that we will listen with respect and love to others and always, always treat each other with compassion.

*Blessings*

*Cathy*

## Report on Open Hands United

The members of the Burton Ave Nicaragua Mission Team were happy to welcome David Sujo Taylor and Elizabeth Coleman to Canada February 1-12. David is the young man who helps organize our trips and serves as our driver and guide while we are in Nicaragua. Elizabeth is David's aunt, and she is also a leader in the Moravian Church in Waspam and a driving force for justice for the people the church serves.

David came to Canada for 4 weeks in May/June 2016, but this was Elizabeth's first trip. The 12 days they spent here were snowy and very cold, but they managed to survive. In fact David got so used to the cold that he wore a T-Shirt during the curling event we held on February 10!

We planned a number of activities for them, including:

- Visiting the food bank and the David Busby Centre
- Pancake breakfast and Winterfest at the waterfront
- A Barrie Colts game
- Tubing (David)
- Speaking at Stayner United Church
- Attending a meeting of the August 2018 mission group in Bracebridge
- Doing the Blanket Exercise with the youth from Youth Inc
- Meeting with the new staff responsible for youth and outreach ministries in Living Waters Presbytery
- Attending a Spanish class
- Going to the men's lunch (David ) and a Women's lunch (Elizabeth)
- Touring a school
- Speaking at the Christian Women's Institute in Guthrie and in Sandy Cove
- Visiting with friends who have been to Nicaragua
- Spending a day in Toronto, which included several hours at the National United Church offices where David and Elizabeth met and spoke with leaders of the church.
- Taking part in a curling fundraising event for the projects we support in Nicaragua
- Meeting with the 2018 youth mission participants and their parents
- Participating in the Sunday worship service at Burton on February 11

As you can see, it was a very busy time, but it was wonderful to have them here!

Looking ahead, Open Hands is currently preparing for two missions. This first is a Youth Mission and will be held July 2-14, 2019. The other is a BAUC-sponsored adult mission set for 12 days in February 2019. If either of these opportunities interest you, please speak to me.

*Rev Pat MacDonald*

*Executive Director, Open Hands United*



## **Treasurer's Report January 2018 YTD**

Similar to previous years, the following report for this newsletter covers only the first month of 2018 as the deadline for newsletter submission was before the February operating results were finalized.

Our total receipts for the first month of this year were \$24,991 compared to \$22,088 over the same period in 2017, which was an increase of \$2,903. Our Local Giving continues to increase in comparison to last year which is a positive indication of our growth over the past two years. A good portion of our increase was also due to the inclusion of receipts for the Ham and Scalloped Potato Dinner this year whereas last year it was not counted until February.

Our total expenses for the month were \$30,202 compared to \$26,943 last year, which represented an increase of \$3,259. This increase was evenly distributed across the expense categories of Church Ministry, Property, and Salaries. This left us with an operating deficit of \$5,211 for the first month of 2018 which was \$357 more than last year's deficit at this time.

While starting the year off with an operating deficit is not an unusual situation, it is certainly something that we will want to keep an eye on as we move forward. To address this situation, a number of fundraising initiatives are planned over the next several months, so please consider supporting these initiatives in whatever way you can. Thank you for your ongoing support of the ministries here at Burton Avenue United Church.

*Sincerely,*

*Alan J. McGee*

*Treasurer*

## Worship and Music Committee

It's been such an odd winter, bouncing between blustery snow squalls, freezing rain threats (not always realized!) and just plain rain. I give thanks for the stability of our church year, offering the comfort found in the rituals of our faith along with exploring new expressions and new understandings of God and our place in this changing world. Through worship, fellowship, and outreach, we at Burton Avenue are an active and faith-filled community with much to celebrate and give thanks for.

We are already into the Season of Lent, a period of fasting and self-reflection that leads us to the joy of Easter and of God's great promise of renewal and redemption in our Christian lives. The Ash Wednesday evening service quietly moved us into this holy time. Holy Communion was celebrated on our first Sunday of Lent. On Palm Sunday the Rainbow Club will "walk through Holy Week", including a palm parade and the sharing of a Seder meal, and Holy Communion will be celebrated in our sanctuary. Maundy Thursday service will speak to us of Christ's last preparations for his great gift of love to humanity. We will be hosting our neighbours, St. George's Anglican Church, for Good Friday service as we join, through scripture and music, to retell and reflect upon Christ's journey to the cross. Then, blessedly, wonderfully, the good news of Easter will be upon us. Come and join in the light and joy of Easter Sunday Service in our lily-graced sanctuary. Thank you to those who will offer their leadership in the weekly Lenten readings; the darkening of the purple candles and the words of reflection are expressions of justice issues in our world and are an important part of how we engage the Lenten experience.

Orders for Memorial lilies will be collected on the Sundays of March 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. These lovely plants will grace our sanctuary on Easter Sunday and be available to take home after the service.

Thank you to all for your patience as we replaced the bibles available in the sanctuary. The very tattered Good News Bibles have been gathered up and NRSV editions are available on the book shelf immediately inside the sanctuary door for folks to pick up for reading and reflection. Ten *More Voices* hymnals have recently been purchased for the sanctuary.

Preparations for enhancing our current sound system plus adding better AV access for the choir and leadership team are in the works. Stay tuned.

Ahead, the spring is busy. Plans are shaping up for a celebration of the fiery spirit of Pentecost. Over the next months our congregation will continue to explore the grace of becoming an Affirming Church with guest speakers Jeffery Dale, from Living Waters Presbytery, and Rev. Philip Cable, from the Living Waters Affirm Ministry Team.

*Blessings, Brenda McGee (Chair)*

## Sunday Worship- Looking Ahead

March 25<sup>th</sup>- Palm Sunday with Holy Communion and Rainbow Club's "Walk thru Holy Week"

March 29<sup>th</sup>- Maundy Thursday service at 6:30 pm

March 30<sup>th</sup>- combined Good Friday Service at Burton Avenue at 10am

April 1<sup>st</sup>- Easter Sunday Sunrise Service at 7am at Heritage Park then in our sanctuary at 10am

April 8<sup>th</sup>- Rev. Todd McDonald pulpit supply

May 13<sup>th</sup>-Christian Family Sunday (Mother's Day)

May 20<sup>th</sup>- Pentecost with Holy Communion



## Rainbow Club

2018 is off to a fun start in the Rainbow Club. We have steady attendance every week in ‘the Ark’, as well as downstairs in the youth room (Thanks, Peter and Cathy!) Every week we talk, create, listen, act and build connections with God and each other.

We are looking forward to continuing our participation in regular worship services through candle lighting and lay readings. If your child is interested in being a reader or candle lighter, please let Catherine or Marni know.

We are currently moving through Lent and getting ready for Easter by reflecting on our “Jelly Bean Prayer” and adding to our jellybean jar each week. Ask a child what that is all about. We are planning our annual Palm Sunday walk and Seder meal for Sunday, March 25. It is a memorable day where the children relive Jesus’ last days through drama, stories, music and food. **All children and youth are invited to join us for this special day.** (There are no speaking parts that require lines to memorize). We are asking our children and youth to consider contributing some of their own money to their Lenten offering. Little labelled bags have been going home. Please ask for one or use your own. The children will be deciding which cause to donate to. Please bring your offering on Palm Sunday.

**Please note that there is no Rainbow Club on March 11 or 18 (our teachers are taking a well-deserved March Break).**

Thank you to everyone who makes Rainbow Club happen—our teachers Carmen, Marni, Sheena, Angela, Carol, Peter and Cathy; Wayne who keeps the Ark looking great; Stacey, Andrea and Rev. Pat for guiding us and keeping us organized, and to the parents for supporting what we do.

**We are looking for a new treasurer.** If you can count change and fill in a simple deposit slip every couple of months, it’s the job for you. It might be a good way for youth to get community hours???

**Remember, children and youth ages 3 and up are always welcome in ‘the Ark’ for drama, stories, crafts, discussion, music and fun.**

*Thanks,*

*Catherine Fletcher*

*Rainbow Club Coordinator*

## Stewardship Committee

I need to begin by thanking everyone on the budget committee for giving up a Saturday morning to do the work that is necessary in order to strike a 2018 budget for Board and Congregational approval.

The budget clarifies the way ahead and challenges us to fulfil our mission at Burton Avenue.

A further thank you to Todd McDonald for his initiative and work with our PAR programme. He did get an assist from Peter Michalski who has the response " Yes Todd " down pat. There was a good response to the information provided. There are forms in the church office for anyone who still is interested in signing up for Pre-Authorized Giving or in making changes to your existing PAR.

The Stewardship Committee has begun to develop a Financial Procedures and Best Practices Manual. All of us, as good stewards, have a duty to protect and to responsibly use and care for the financial resources entrusted to us. We also have a duty to protect ourselves and others from unfounded accusations regarding the handling of money. If we do not have proper safeguards in place we put our church and volunteers at risk by being in a position that cannot be defended. Thankfully Burton Ave. has not had an issue regarding the handling of church funds but we are a fast growing congregation with a budget that has increased substantially and so there is a need for more formal procedures in some areas. We are working to make sure that the procedures put in place do the job but are not unduly onerous. This is good stewardship!

As I speak, Spring Fling is about to happen. A big thank you to Harv Garraway and his committee . There is a massive amount of work involved in this event. This is a major fund raiser at Burton Avenue but it is not by far the only one. None of them would be successful without your supporting our mission with your time and talent.

We cannot thank you enough.

*Brenda Young*

## Samaritan House

To our faithful friends of Burton Ave. church,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for yet another Christmas season of partnership.

The congregation of Burton Ave. holds a special place with Samaritan House. We can never get over the generosity that you extend to the children we seek to support during the Christmas season. We don't ever get over the extent of need we see each year from single moms from abusive situations to working poor families but with the compassion and support from all of you we are able to ease the burden from the parents we assist. As usual the numbers continue to rise for those struggling in Barrie but it is so great to know that together we can ensure that the children from these families do not go without a Christmas time.

All the parents extended their thanks to you when they picked up their gifts and asked that their thanks be passed on to the donor. So on behalf of all the families we extend our deepest gratitude for your very generous gifts to the children.

On behalf of Samaritan House we also extend our thanks and appreciation of the time, effort and thought that each of you put into the gifts you provide through the Christmas Snowflake Program. We are so blessed to have such wonderful people with shared compassion for our clients and to have such a long and strong partnership with all of you at Burton Ave. United church.

From all of us at Samaritan House we wish you a wonderful 2018.

*Blessings, Kerry Ploughman*



**Dinners and Other Fundraising Dates From Stewardship****2018 - 2019****2018**

Sun., Feb. 25 - Youth Inc. Bake Sale

Fri., Mar. 2 - Spring Fling Gala " The Royal Wedding "

Sun., Mar. 4, 11, 18 - Memorial Easter Lilies Sales

Sun., Apr. 15 - Sun., Apr. 29 - MacGregor Meat Sales - (delivery the week of May 7 )

Fri., &amp; Sat., Apr. 20 -21- Hunger Awareness Event—Youth Inc

Fri., Apr. 27 - Roast Beef Dinner

Mon., May 28 - Nine for NICA golf tournament

Tue., June 19 - Strawberry Supper

Sun., Oct. 7 - Sun., Nov. 18 - Fall Fundraiser -"Burton 145 "

Fri., Oct. 26 - Roast Beef Dinner

Tue., Nov. 13 - Living Waters Presbytery Meetings and Dinner

Sat., Dec. 1 - Victorian Tea

Sun., Dec. 2 - Chilli and Chowder

**2019**

Fri., Jan. 25 - Ham and Scalloped Potato Dinner

Fri., Mar. 1 - Spring Fling

Fri., Apr. 26- Roast Beef Dinner

Tue., June 18 - Strawberry Supper

**Other 2018 Dates That May Be Helpful In Planning**

Fri., Mar. 23 - All Ages Games Night and Potluck snacks evening hosted by Lifelong Learning

Fri. - Sun. Apr. 6 -8 - Women's Retreat

Sun., Apr. 22 Cookstown Theatre Outing

Sun., June 24 - "Come From Away" Theatre Outing

Sun., Sept. 16 - Welcome Back Barbeque (date is tentative).



### **The Truth and Reconciliation Group**

The members of the Truth and Reconciliation Group continue to plan educational events and worship services with the aim of seeking right relations, justice, healing and reconciliation between non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples. On January 14, we were honoured to hear Sarah Jane Wetelainen deliver a thoughtful meditation on what it means to follow the call to serve “the least” (see next page). Part of abiding that call, she reminded us, involves challenging laws, practices and perceptions that deem some Canadians “the least” to begin with.

The conclusion to Sarah Jane's message deserves to be cited in full:

*"Indigenous people living on reserve across Canada are being treated as the least: the least clean water, least money for schools, least safe housing. Youth suicide rates that soar above the national average. I don't feel like I need to go on. We are all treaty people. It doesn't matter if your family ran a residential school, or had nothing to do with it, or if you have only been a Canadian for a month. Treaties were signed between the Queen (who by the way is still the head of our country even though we are independent) and Indigenous groups across the country. We are responsible for our treaties and we are responsible for our society.*

*We are people of faith and we are called by God to stop complaining that we didn't start something and to work to end it. We are responsible for who are the least and how they are treated and we are called to do our best to visit and give clothes and our support to those who are sick, in prison, and everyone we think is the least. It's time to hear the call to truth and reconciliation and realize, finally, who it is who's calling."*

As part of the call to truth and reconciliation, on January 20, about 20 people from our congregation attended a KAIROS Blanket Exercise, a popular, interactive teaching tool designed to teach the history of Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations in Canada. Called a "humble workshop that has evolved into a movement," this powerful exercise was followed by a talking circle with Indigenous Elder Gertie Beaucage. Gertie is a member of Nipissing First Nation who shared her experiences and learnings as a residential school survivor. All who attended were clearly moved by both the exercise and Gertie's story.

We have started printing a Territorial Acknowledgement in the Burton Banner out of a belief that the church is called into a relationship of respect with Indigenous people. We will also begin speaking the acknowledgement aloud on special occasions.

We hope to continue to plan educational events as we seek justice and reconciliation with our Indigenous relatives. Tentative plans include the screening of the powerful documentary film *Truly and Humbly*, which chronicles the United Church of Canada's 1986 apology to Indigenous peoples, and a Q&A with filmmaker Hoi Cheu.

Please consider joining us in this journey! Feel free to approach one of our members with ideas or suggestions, or better yet, come out to one of our meetings. We come together biweekly in the lounge on Fridays at 9:30 am.

Warmly,

*Julie*

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

## Youth Inc.

As I reflect on the happenings at Youth Inc over the past few months I experience a great sense of pride in the participation of the youth in our awareness around what it means to work toward being in right relationship and reconciliation with our indigenous peoples of the area. We have been graced with a presentation from Meagan Lortie, the youth program worker at the Barrie Native Friendship Centre and participated in the Kairos Blanket Exercise including a discussion from an elder, to help us on our journey. Through discussion and exploring we have discovered we have not originated from Barrie, or Canada, but from many places throughout this beautiful world that God had given us.



Our group has been working towards a bake sale which we held on February 25th. We raised \$610.00 in support of the Hope to Hunger Program at the Barrie Native Friendship Centre and will be holding a Hunger Awareness Night to raise funds for needs of the indigenous people. We also have enjoyed some fun and competitive games and a family event was held at Snow Valley where the screams of parents and youth could be heard as they sped down the slopes snow tubing!

If you know someone in grade 6 or up please encourage them to come join our group where we are working to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God. (Micah 6:8)

Submitted by Kim Stoll

### **Affirming Ministry Team**

At the church board meeting in December 2017, a motion was approved to start the process of discernment and reflection that is required before voting, as a congregation, on a motion to declare Burton Avenue United Church to be an Affirming Ministry.

Affirming Ministries are congregations, presbyteries, Conferences, educational institutions, and other ministries within the united Church that publicly declare their commitment to inclusion and justice for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. In addition to making an explicit statement about issues of sexuality and gender, Affirming Ministries also make a broader commitment to inclusion and justice for groups that have been historically excluded or marginalized, such as those facing ageism, racism, sexism, accessibility and socio-economic differences. More information can be found at the Affirm United website: [www.affirmunited.ca](http://www.affirmunited.ca).

We have formed an Affirming Ministries team at BAUC to engage with the congregation on a process of study, discernment and reflection to discover how we can build on the existing welcoming spirit at BAUC and become more intentionally inclusive and justice-seeking. We will be hosting a number of activities over the next few months and look forward to connecting with you.

The team has also created a “wonder box,” which provides an opportunity for you to ask us questions about our work, provide encouragement or voice concerns. The wonder box is available in the foyer of the church, just outside the Rainbow Club, and we would be happy to hear from you!

*Angela Kerr, Islay Scott, Cathy Manzato, Leslie Whidden, Julie McGonegal, Christine Naylor, Alita Morgan*

### **Life Long Learning Committee**

We are excited to welcome Ken Down, Sally Telford, Shelly Cliche, & Briana O'Brien to our committee this term.

We have some great plans for the upcoming year!

Save the Date! On Friday, March 23rd we are planning on hosting a BAUC All-Ages Games Night and Pot Luck Snacks evening. Bring your favourite game (board game, table top game, card game, anything goes) and your favourite pot luck snack to share. The evening is a great night for fellowship, food, and fun!

We have started to make plans for camp weekend in September, at Sparrow Lake Camp. Watch for more information to come in the Burton Banner about camp weekend and plan for a fun weekend away.

We are looking forward to a great year!

*Life Long Learning Committee*

*Nicole Masuda, Marni O'Brien, Ken Down, Shelley Cliche, Sally Telford, & Briana O'Brien*

## Administration

It is great to be able to report that everything is working as we like it to be in church. The building is clean, the parking lot is snow free, we have heat, water and light, the elevator is working. I guess it is just fine to sit back and count our blessings, and use the church building as much and as often as we like. Just think for a moment of going to church and on the way in you're wondering... will there be hydro this morning, will the heat be on, can the washrooms be used today, is there parking nearby, will the minister show up, will there be music for the singing, is there someone for power point, will there be Sunday school teachers, ...and the list could go on for a bit. May I suggest to you to take a moment and think of all the people actively involved in the service on Sunday mornings to make it what it is every week and say a thank you to at least one person for doing their part faithfully and willingly from week to week.

Our committee has been reinforced by Don Lee, who has many years of experience in this aspect of church life from Central United, a welcome addition to our aging group.

*Submitted by Warren De Boer, on behalf of Barry, Lyle and Don.*

## Congregational Life

Not too much to update on since the Annual Report but we have been busy planning for the hopefully warm sunny months ahead!

The following new members were welcomed into the Burton Avenue Church family on February 4 by transfer or profession of faith:

Marinus and Gisele Bouman  
Christine and Tom Nayler  
Chelsea Skanes  
Robert and Candyce Brown  
Edd & Sherry Taylor  
A warm welcome to all!

February 4 was also the day of our Annual Meeting which was preceded by a soup luncheon with lots of desserts hosted by our committee.

Upcoming events include:

March 12 - our committee will be catering the Telephone Pioneers luncheon

March 30 - we will be hosting a reception after the Good Friday service with our friends from St George's Anglican

April 22 - watch for a sign up sheet for the Cookstown Theater to see "Harvest Moon Rising" preceded by lunch at Hot Stacks

That's it for now. More to come in the next issue.

*Lois, Linda, Lynn, Nancy, Janet, Alita and Valerie  
( your Congregational Life Committee )*

**Open Hands United**  
**Invites you to consider**  
**Being part of a short-term mission to Nicaragua!**

**When:** February 19 -March 2, 2019

**Where:** Nicaragua

**What:** This experience includes 1 full day in Managua, 7 days in Waspam on the east coast of Nicaragua and 2 nights in Granada, which is a beautiful old colonial city. While in Nicaragua we will meet with leaders of the Moravian Church, visit schools, hospitals and an ecolodge, learn about the political and social issues faced by the local indigenous people, travel downriver to visit remote communities, share stories and come to know the faith community in Waspam.

**Cost:** \$2400

**Maximum Number of Participants:** 9

If you think you might be interested in this exciting opportunity, there will be an Information Evening held at Burton Ave United Church on Tuesday, March 20 at 7 pm. All are welcome.

Applications are available in the church office and on our website. Application deadline is Sunday April 8. If you have any questions, please contact Rev Pat MacDonald at [revpat@rogers.com](mailto:revpat@rogers.com) or 705 795 9438.