



The MEMO

Let's We Forget



The Newsletter of St. Mark's United Church, 115 Orton Park Road, Toronto M1G 3G9

www.st-marks.ca

November 2009

ST. MARK'S TURKEY DINNER Saturday, November 21, 4:30 – 7:00

Don't you love the smell of turkey roasting?

Can't you just imagine your plate piled with succulent turkey, stuffing, mashed potato, mixed vegetables and a generous helping of gravy? The cranberry sauce . . . waiting on the table . . . and then . . . homemade pie!

Yes! It is St. Mark's annual Turkey Dinner!

Tickets are available at the Church Office -- \$15 for adults and \$6 for children 12 years and younger. Get your tickets on Sunday or contact us at 416-439-8623 and office@st-marks.ca.

Bring family along. Invite friends for dinner. Enjoy an evening of good food, generous conversation, and great people. We have lots of parking at the back but with all that turkey you may want to go green and walk over!

You know the saying that "many hands make light work." Volunteers to help for even an hour are welcome! Many members also contribute foods for the meal, enhancing the amount we are able to raise in support of our ministries. Want to help? Check the lists in the entrance way or call the church office.

This annual project is a great way to get to know each other as we work together and a great way to meet our community neighbours. Plan to attend! Plan to lend a hand!

JNAC UPDATE

Marg – JNAC Chair

A survey has been mailed to all St. Mark's members and adherents with questions covering how we see ourselves as a church, how we would like to see ourselves as a church, and what we see as necessary to the continued health and wellbeing of our church in the way of ministry personnel, are included. The target date for the return of the survey is November 3. It can be completed on paper, or on line. The survey is easily accessible from our website www.st-marks.ca. Over two Sundays, the children will be completing a simplified version in Sunday School, or with the help of their parents.

If anyone is unsure of how to fill in the survey, or how to make their thoughts clear, please call Carol in the office, or speak to one of the JNAC committee. We will be really happy to make a time to help. It is important that each person's voice be heard.

Upon return of the surveys, the easier part of compiling the numerical data will be done using an Excel spreadsheet. The more challenging part will be reading all the comments, then faithfully interpreting the data into what we as a congregation envision for our future. The results of this survey are used at a later date by the Search Committee, as they find us permanent ministry staff.



November Events at a Glance!

November 1st – All Soul's Sunday

November 8th – Peace Sabbath

November 8/15/22 – Shepherd's Pies

November 21st – Turkey Dinner

November 29th – First Sunday of Advent

For the detailed SMUC Calendar of events
www.st-marks.ca > Outreach > Calendar

Condolences....

All at St. Mark's were sad to learn that Susan Brown's father, Lorne Brown, passed away on Saturday October 3, after a long battle with cancer. Over the years, Lorne was very supportive of St. Mark's Christmas projects.

On October 26, St. Mark's was again saddened upon learning that Cheryl-Lynn's father, Keith, had died.

Please hold both families in your prayers.



The United Church of Canada

L'Eglise Unie du Canada

St. Mark's is a progressive, inclusive, and life-affirming Christian community of faith within The United Church of Canada.

Worship services are held Sundays at 11 am. Come early for coffee and fellowship!

SHEPHERD'S PIES FOR SALE!!

Karen – Social Committee Chair



Need a dinner idea? Or better yet, the idea AND the dinner?

This November, your Social Committee will be preparing delicious Shepherd's Pies for sale, with all proceeds going towards the purchase of additional luncheon plates and tablecloths for St. Mark's!

In an effort to reduce waste, we would like to take pre-orders AND have you bring your casserole dishes (with your name on them please).

Please pre-order in advance and bring your casserole dish to the downstairs kitchen on November 8th. We will fill them with our beef and vegetable base, with mashed potatoes on top and return them to you the following week. The cost will be \$2.50 a serving, with each serving a generous cup of filling. Your cost will be consistent with the size of your casserole.



If you don't have a casserole dish, don't worry, we will have foil containers as well (2 small servings for \$5). Just order in advance.

We will distribute the Shepherd's Pies frozen on Sundays November 15th and 22nd. Simply take them home and either pop them in the oven or the freezer!

The sign up sheet is posted in the church, or call Carol in the Church Office.

ST. MARK'S ANNIVERSARY AWARDS

Mary Ethel– Vice Chair

This year's recipients of St. Mark's Anniversary Awards were Bettie & Dave M. & Bart B.

Bettie & Dave, long time members of St. Mark's, are the embodiment of "Pastoral Care" – where there's a need, they are there –transporting, visiting, building, cooking, bringing humour into both dark & happy times. They have spent many years supporting and serving St. Mark's and the greater community in various ways.

Bart is a "doer"! He has served his church and his community in many capacities. He is the "role model" for fathers – a man who wanted to instil in his children Christian values, & who became a working model of such a father! Bart is still making the rounds of Chair positions on the Church Board, and we feared he would never be recognized for his wonderful contributions if we waited for him to get off the Board!

For their combined efforts in supporting and advertising the warmth that is St. Mark's, we give you thanks & blessings.

(Dave was in Tobermory & missed the whole thing!)



Celebrations...

Kathy and Richard T. renewed their marriage vows on Saturday, October 17th at St. Mark's. We wish them every blessing.

St. Mark's continues to grow! On Sunday October 18th, Gail and Terry, Leslie, Don, Linda and Todd, Helen, Doreen and John were welcomed to St. Marks through transfer of membership.

St. Mark's celebrated our 51st anniversary on October 18! The church was full, the service was compelling and the celebration continued downstairs after the service. Memories are important as they shape us going forward, and this was a memorable day!

On October 25th we held a covenanting service for Rev. Cheryl-Lynn MacPherson, with the St. Mark's congregation and Southeast Presbytery. This is a relatively rare event at St. Mark's given Alan's long tenure. Our commitments were sincere, we re-affirmed our faith and came forward for anointing and blessing. It was a very special day.

Welcome and congratulations all!!

Breaking News is "SM News"!

One of the quickest ways St. Mark's has to get information out is the "SM News", emailed every Friday.

Each Friday, the most pertinent details of the past week and the week to come are efficiently communicated in a single email.

The email distribution list is also one of our most effective means to get an immediate message out...this could be a message of need, a message of hope, or a message of celebration.

If you have an email address and you are NOT receiving this email gem, send Carol a note at carol@st-marks.ca. Request to be added and that's it! Done! Fini! You're on the list!

Remember, if you have recently adopted a new technology, acquired or changed your email address, or changed your contact information, let Carol know in the office so we can find you!



*St. Mark's strives to be a nut free environment.
Please give attention to all ingredients when bringing food to events.*

JANUARY STARTS ST. MARK'S BOOK STUDY!!

Rob – Christian Education Committee

Looking for a different way to spend your Friday night?

Kicking off in January and running for eight sessions until early May, the Christian Education Committee is planning an adult Book Study Group. This unique program will run every 2nd Friday evening for about 2.5 hours of fellowship and discussion.

Generally, "the book" adds to our knowledge of our Christian faith, and interested participants will decide before Christmas on the actual book we would study. Copies of the book would be available for purchase by the participants (depending on the numbers, usually at a discount) or alternatively, you could buy your own copy directly from your bookstore of choice.

The Friday night agenda is classic St. Mark's – talking, eating and having fun!! Each participant will have completed the regular reading assignments prior to Friday, and we share leadership of each session throughout the term. Each session has two or three volunteer presenters who talk for 20 - 30 minutes about this week's material, and then we breakout into discussion groups of five or six for another 20 or 30 minutes. After a half hour break for goodies (also prepared by volunteers), we would come back into one large group and listen to each of the smaller groups present their views. Ideally, people will have read the book/ chapters; however, even if they have not, they would get value from the discussion.

The main purpose is to have fun. There will be no pressure on anybody to do anything other than attend and enjoy the gathered community. People will only do what they feel comfortable doing. We know that God will provide presenters and goodies! Feel free to call me, Rob, if you are interested or have any questions. I can be reached by email at office@st-marks.ca or by phone at home or on my mobile – or you can contact Carol in the Office. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex as well.

SCARBOROUGH INTERFAITH AFFORDABLE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Marg

As many of you know, this will be St. Mark's fifth season of working with the Out of the Cold program held every Friday night/Saturday morning, from the first of November until the end of March, at Knox United Church. It is unfortunately necessary, and only a band-aid solution to the homelessness disaster.

A few of us from different faith groups who have been active in this project from its inception felt that we'd like to do something more concrete and longer-lasting so about 18 months ago began to meet to see how this could happen. As a result, the Scarborough Interfaith Affordable Housing Association was born. Our aim is to buy a house somewhere in Scarborough and provide an affordable, supportive home for four formerly homeless individuals. We researched how we'd like to do that and decided to follow the model used by Sanctuary, an organization downtown which has two such homes.

SIAHA (not a friendly acronym, but much shorter to write!) has recently become incorporated and is working on acquiring its charitable status. Our aim is actually two-pronged – to provide a home and to advocate for the homeless by raising public

awareness of the problem and challenging politicians to partner with housing groups to provide viable solutions.

In the upcoming months, we will be holding a public forum with Michael Shapcott, a universally well-known and respected housing expert from Toronto's Wellesley Institute, and as many local politicians who accept our invitation as possible. After we receive our charitable status, we will begin some serious fundraising to augment the \$6,000 we already have towards the purchase of a home. We anticipate needing hands-on help too with renovations, and donations of goods-in-kind such as building materials and furniture.

This is really just an initial FYI. We'll be keeping our respective congregations up-to-date as our work progresses

Reaching Out!



A reminder that again this year, St. Mark's Outreach Ministry Team is planning to deliver Christmas Hampers to 50 families from our community. Like last year, you can "adopt" a single child, or, an entire family (which means providing gifts for one or all) – &/or – you can consider a donation to the Community Outreach Fund and mark it "For Christmas Hampers".

As well as the gifts – our hampers include one week's food for the family + fresh fruits and vegetables + a \$25 food voucher. We will also be asking for your support in packing & delivering the hampers during the week of December 14.

Find Mary Ethel you at Church or email her at memorton@sympatico.ca if you have questions or wish to offer your gifts in some way. Come & help – your heart will thank you!

Countdown to the December 6 UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen!

This important Summit will bring world leader together to direct a global environmental movement. So what can I do you ask? Every single voice directed to our world leaders gets us that much closer. Check out the David Suzuki Foundation at www.davidsuzuki.org to learn more, and sign an e-petition to let your voice be heard. We will also post it on our bulletin board.

We need to preserve this glorious planet for our children and grandchildren.

ST. MARK'S "PHOENIX" REVISITED?

On October 13, 2009 the thriving Wetaskiwin First United Church, a small community just south of Edmonton, was levelled in a fire.



With memories of our own fire 25 years ago still smouldering, a member of our Board contacted the minister of First United Church, Rev. Ruth Lumax and offered our help, our experiences and our support for whatever they needed.

Rev. Lumax replied, "Thanks St. Mark's, you know then some of what we're dealing with at the moment. We have temporary office and worship space lined up. We're on LCD projection and have all that resource material, including laptop intact so we can worship without paper or books for now.Until we know about permanent space, we're trying to travel lightly. Thanks for the offer, prayers are always appreciated. Peace." In subsequent conversations, Ruth again thanked St. Mark's and foresees "many possibilities for a better future and greener building in this past week's events".

The phoenix is a mythical bird with a colourful plumage and a tail of gold and scarlet. It has a 500 to 1,000 year life-cycle, near the end of which it builds itself a nest of myrrh twigs that then ignites; both nest and bird burn fiercely and are reduced to ashes, from which a new, young phoenix or phoenix egg arises, reborn anew to live again.[Wikipedia]

Hold our Wetaskiwin friends close in your thoughts, and pray that they too will rise from the ashes renewed.

November 21st Craft Exhibition

St. Mark's' own Gayle will be featuring her unique and inspired crafts. This year, in addition to her "Signature Scarves" and the multitude of "Angels" she creates, Gayle is introducing a Glass Block Christmas Present, which lights up from within and makes a wonderful addition under the tree before and after Christmas, or as an accent on a coffee table.

ALL proceeds will be donated to St. Mark's. Last year, Gayle donated in excess of \$1,500 so let's enable her continued success!

Classified Column

If you need to get something out there....place it here!



Toronto Southeast Presbytery Fine print



The Presbytery announcements for this month are offered below.

- Nov 7 – Providing Abundance...What Kind of Fairness – Beach United Church
- Nov 11/12/13/15 – Rev. Bruce Sanguin, "Greening and Growing Congregations" at Eglinton St. Georges United Church
- Nov 22 – EcoFair at Glebe Road United Church
- Nov 25 – The Dead Sea Scrolls Then and Now (Their Significance for Jews and Christians) – Dr. Eileen Schuller) McMaster University

Contact Glen, St. Mark's Presbytery representative either on Sunday or at office@st-marks.ca for more Presbytery activity.

Thinking Of Others....



Each Sunday, "Prayers of the Community" are offered for people both inside and outside our congregation, or for issues impacting our broader church community.

If you would like someone mentioned in prayer, write a note in the Book of Prayers on the Communion Table, or talk to Carol.

REVIEWER'S CORNER

DVD Review: *InkHeart* (PG13)

Karen Mackay – Contributor-at-large



InkHeart (starring Brendan Fraser and based on a book of the same name) is about a guy (Fraser) who gets married and has a baby girl. One night, as he is reading his daughter a story, the story and stuff that he is saying is coming true! Before he realizes what has happened, a character comes out of the book and his wife goes in! The remainder of the movie is the father and daughter's journey to find "the book" - because (in a great twist) the character that came out of the book doesn't want to go back and burns every copy of the book that he finds - to hopefully get his wife/her mother back. It was a really good movie! I give it 4 stars.

THE OTHER CORNER...

Allan Conquer – MEMO Content Dictator

Over the last month, I received many constructive comments on the October Memo. Many, many thanks. Among the many suggestions was an interesting one for a Poet's Corner.

Unfortunately I am not a poet, nor a student of poetry - though I do enjoy applied iambic pentameter originating in Stratford-upon-Avon, and (under certain conditions) a well constructed limerick - I thought I would extend the suggestion and offer "The Other Corner", a place in the Memo where poetry, very short stories, brief memories, sonnets and just about anything else that could fit in this space, can find a home.

No significant rules, just the acceptance that I am the "content dictator", and your trust and patience that I will do my best to be fair to all. Email submissions to me at ajconq@gmail.com.



St. Mark's United Church: We are called to be a progressive, inclusive life-affirming Christian community of faith within The United Church of Canada.

An "Affirming Congregation" is one that has intentionally reflected upon what it means to be inclusive and that has evaluated its openness to the ongoing work of being intentional about how it welcomes and includes others within the life and work of the church. All barriers to those wishing to be a part of the congregation are explored, particularly, though not only, those around issues of sexual orientation and gender identity.

