



# The Fall MEMO

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

[www.st-marks.ca](http://www.st-marks.ca)

October 2009

## A JNAC FOR ST. MARK'S

Margaret Mooney – JNAC Chair

Each time there is a change in pastoral relations, a Joint Needs Assessment Report is required before a new minister can be called to fill the vacancy. The Manual, the rules and regulations of governance in the United Church of Canada, sets out the requirements for what must be covered in this report.

In 2006, when Alan was on sabbatical, there was a Joint Needs Assessment completed to re-vision who St. Mark's was and how to move forward as a congregation. However, as we were not anticipating a change in pastoral relations, that component of the Assessment was not completed.

Now, in order to hire a new minister, a Joint Needs Assessment Committee had to be formed to study and report on the ministry personnel needs of St. Mark's. The Report will also articulate the needs and expectations of our congregation. In order to do this, there will be an open and participatory process of information gathering and analysis. The Nominating Team suggested names to the congregation at a meeting on September 13, and they were accepted. Along with two members of Presbytery, those members will work for several months to prepare the JNAC Report.

The St. Mark's members of the JNAC are: Art Nicholson; Rob Peck; Leslie Wright; Teresa Smith; Harry Brown; Anne Greenwood; Luella Stephens; Carol Caise as Secretary; and, Marg Mooney as Chair. The two members from Presbytery are Beth Moore and Jean Day.

As of the date of publication of this edition of The MEMO, the Committee has had two meetings. The first one was chaired by Beth Moore and was organizational in nature, with the choosing of a Chairperson and a Secretary. It was decided that a congregational survey would be undertaken to help the committee prepare a description of the congregation's mission and ministry, as well as a vision of the ministry personnel needed to move forward with the work of our church. Both these things are important when searching and calling new ministers. When potentially interested applicants read the JNAC Report, they should be able to get a sense of who St. Mark's is as a congregation, and what we have to offer ministry personnel. It should give them a feeling of whether or not the position(s) we have to offer would be a good fit.

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### October Events at a Glance!

October 4<sup>th</sup> – Worldwide Communion  
October 4<sup>th</sup> – Anaphylaxis Training  
October 11<sup>th</sup> – Thanksgiving Service  
October 18<sup>th</sup> – Anniversary Service

For the detailed SMUC Calendar of events  
[www.st-marks.ca](http://www.st-marks.ca) > Outreach > Calendar

### Anniversary Sunday!

Our special guest speaker for the Anniversary Service is Rev. Mark Toulouse.

Rev. Toulouse is the new principal of Emmanuel College and is a Professor of the History of Christianity.

### It's Turkey Time!

The dinner bell will soon be ringing, when St. Mark's hosts its annual homemade turkey dinner with all the fixins' and delicious home baked pies on Saturday, November 21st from 4:30 - 7:00 p.m. The evening will also feature the showing of creations by local artists for all to enjoy.

Cost for a complete meal is \$15/Adults and \$6/Children (12 and under).

For more information and to reserve tickets call the Church office (Carol) at 416-439-8623



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!*

## A Season of Thankfulness and Letting Go

Rev. Cheryl-Lynn MacPherson

I think it's safe to say Autumn is my favourite season. I love the crispness in the air, the vibrant colours as the leaves change and their crunch under my feet as I walk in the woods. I love the sights and sounds and smells of a fall fair where one can experience the rich bounty of the earth, where a community can gather and celebrate the harvest. This year I experience these things with a grateful spirit, conscious of the many blessings in my life.



I consider St. Mark's to be one of those blessings. It is indeed quite early in my time with you to offer much perspective, but I can say that it is indeed very refreshing to experience a congregation that has committed itself to claiming and living out its faith. I see dedicated people in leadership positions in the congregation who are working hard to ensure that St. Mark's moves forward in faith. I see a congregation that celebrates God's presence and acts with deeds of generosity, kindness, justice and peace. I see a congregation that recognizes how important it is to pause and centre ourselves in the presence of the divine. These are indeed blessings to celebrate!

The season of Autumn is also a season of letting go. We see this in the world around us as plants offer up their bounty and trees let go of their leaves. It is as if the earth is offering us the opportunity to consider those things we might let go. We all know that letting go is often painful - that we all let go of things at our own pace - that letting go is a process we sometimes have to repeat - that letting go can be frightening.

I wonder whether the season of Autumn invites us to consider what we might let go of, in order to free up space to recognize the blessings in our lives. When we are thankful, grateful, conscious of the blessings in our lives, we, and the world around us is changed.

May you experience the peace and blessing of God in this season of thankfulness and letting go. Amen.

## Meeting our Mission & Ministries: Parks & Recreation MIM Program

### Outreach Committee

On Tuesday, October 20th between 12:00 Noon and 3:00 P.M. we welcome the MIM Program from the Toronto Parks and Recreation Department, who will be meeting weekly in St. Mark's downstairs.

This is St. Mark's first new program in response to the recommendations of the 2006 JNAC initiative combined with our new found basement space flexibility (its all part of being self-sustaining financially and not dependent upon rental income).

More on this program next month!

## Thinking Of Others....



Over the past month, Prayers of the Community have been offered for families within our congregation, family relations within our congregation, or for issues impacting our broader church community.

If you have a minute or two, review the Book of Prayers (located on the Communion Table), and reflect upon the requests.

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



## Celebrations...and a little R&R!

Congratulations to Robin Greenwood and her fiancé, Rob Gardiner, who announced their engagement this past summer! The date is set - Friday July 9, 2010.

Blessings of a life filled with love, health and happiness to both of you from all of us at St. Mark's!

## Classified Column

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



## 17th BENDALE SCOUT GROUP



This group provides boys and girls with a varied program that introduces them to both indoor and outdoor activities on a weekly basis. Participation in the program will provide today's youth ages 5-14 with the opportunity to experience the outside environment, develop leadership skills and build their own self confidence. Meetings are held at G.B. Little Jr. Public School School.

Contact Carol in the office for more details.



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

## REACHING OUT!

Mary Ethel Morton –Outreach Chair



This year, your Outreach Ministry Team is asking you to once again support 50 families from our community with Christmas Hampers. What does this mean for you? You can “adopt” a single child, or, an entire family. That will mean providing gifts for one or all (including the parent/parents). For those who aren’t able to shop for a family, but would like to support this endeavour, please 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.

Come & help – your heart will thank you!



## FINANCIALLY – ST. MARK’S IS ON TRACK!

Loreen Naylor – Chair, Finance and Stewardship

Thank you to everyone at St. Mark’s for keeping up with your offerings over the summer! Historically, cash flow has been tight over the summer months as many people are away on vacation, and we have tended to “squeak by” financially during July and August. This is the first time that we have ended the summer as strong financially as we began.

Many of you have signed up for PAR (pre-authorized bank remittance) for your offering commitment. This is a great way to ensure that our offering income is regular throughout the year and particularly during the summer period. PAR is easy and convenient and can be changed at any time with a call to the church. Carol can set you up or provide you with more information on this service.

The Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team will soon be coordinating the 2010 budget planning process with all of the St. Mark’s ministry teams. This is an exciting time for all ministry teams to plan their ministry programs for 2010 and to identify costs for each of these plans. We look forward to participation with all congregational members at a meeting in early December to review the proposed ministry plans and associated budget. We will be providing you with more information on the budget development process and the opportunity for you to participate in conversation regarding the ministry and budget priorities for our work together in 2010.

As we enter this year of transition, assessment and searching, we can be confident that as a result of your continued commitment, St. Mark’s is financially stable. Thank you!

Your presence, time, prayers, and financial support to St. Mark’s enable this very special community of faith to provide many diverse and important ministries to respond to God’s call to care for each other, our community and our world.

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### Yoga

There are Yoga Classes at St. Mark’s on Saturday and Sunday morning from 7:30 to 8:30 – telephone 416-438-4242 for more information.



Some of the benefits of Yoga include: Stress management; reducing obesity & anxiety; proper breathing, exercises, relaxation, and diet; positive thinking and rejuvenation,

Contact Carol in the office for more details.

### 411 – St. Mark’s

If you need information on what’s happened, what’s happening or looking for a time and place to let it happen, contact Carol in the office at 416-439-8623

Office hours are mornings 9 till noon, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

Our web site is also an excellent source of information on the comings and goings of our life at St. Mark’s. Bookmark and shortcut to your desktop [www.st-marks.ca](http://www.st-marks.ca).

Email is also a very viable option. Cheryl-Lynn can be reached at [cheryl-lynn@st-marks.ca](mailto:cheryl-lynn@st-marks.ca), and Carol is at [carol@st-marks.ca](mailto:carol@st-marks.ca).

If your communication or call is of a private nature, your confidentiality is guaranteed.

For those who know, and those few who don’t, the United Church Observer is our award winning monthly magazine. Due to its financial and editorial independence, The Observer comments freely on matters within and outside The United Church of Canada.

The United Church  
**Observer**

If you aren’t subscribing to the Observer, maybe you should! It’s a great read!

Subscriptions come due in October; ask Carol if you need more details.



*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.*



## A JNAC FOR ST. MARK'S – continued from the front page

At the second meeting, the congregational survey we did in 2006 was resurrected and modified to fit the need now. Many of the former questions were streamlined and new ones formed to help us describe the gifts and skills of the new ministry personnel. It is expected that the survey will be mailed to all members and adherents before October 15, and that the completed questionnaires will be returned to the church by the end of October. The option of completing the survey on-line will be available, if that is an easier way to send in answers. The children and youth will be consulted and asked to complete a shorter version of the survey.

The JNAC strongly encourages everyone who receives a survey to take the time to complete it and let the committee know how you regard St. Mark's and what you believe we need as ministry personnel to move forward into our mission statement, of being "a progressive, inclusive Christian community of faith within The United Church of Canada that is committed to engaging faith, scripture and tradition in progressive ways, seeking to be inclusive of all, regardless of ability, age, class, ethnicity, gender, race or sexual orientation, and striving to affirm the inherent blessing of life found in all Creation."

Updates of the JNAC's progress will appear in upcoming editions of The MEMO, as well as regular announcements at the beginning of worship services. You'll be kept posted of the next steps after the completion of the survey and its analysis.

## EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS!

Allan Conquer – Communications



**T**he beginning of September found the Communications Committee huddled around Chair Bart Boniface's dining room table reviewing our plans and strategies for the upcoming year. Our challenge: get the St. Mark's message to 100% of our members, and then effectively to the wider community.

Historically, much of SMUC's communication burden fell upon Alan Hall, who with his links and relationships throughout SMUC, became the "central clearing house" of news in our SMUC community of faith. Alan faithfully produced the weekly SM News email, the monthly Memo, and connected the dots every Sunday. Oh yes, lest we forget, using special gloves (and apparently language not fit to print) Alan changed the sign! We all owe a great deal of thanks to Alan for this part of his ministry and his many other gifts.

This year, the Communications Committee has broken out the tasks as follows:

- Sign Board – Kristan Erner is managing the sign;
- SM News – Carol Caise is uniquely positioned to maintain our weekly email;
- The Memo – Allan Conquer will lead assembly of The Memo;
- [www.st-marks.ca](http://www.st-marks.ca) – Anne Greenwood will liaise with our webmaster Kathryn Moase
- Community Newsletters – Bart Boniface will coordinate these efforts; and
- Other Communications – The Committee is looking at how to address the thousands of families in all the micro communities we live in.

Moving forward, the Communication Committee plans on studying the tactical or potentially strategic possibilities of social networking technologies like Facebook or Twitter, the continuing evolution of our web-site and leveraging the maximum benefit out of all communication tools at our disposal, including our team of Pastoral Care callers, and our outbound phone messaging system.



The Communications Committee is always looking for helpful suggestions, constructive comments, and the knowledge of how to best connect to you! So...

- 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.
- If you or your committee have contributions for any of our publications, get hold of Bart Boniface or Carol in the office
- If you feel any of our existing communications capabilities are lacking, suggest what you need to see

Effective communications is a two way relationship – let's answer each other's call.

## Classified Column

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



## Looking for some "action"?? House League Hockey without the weekend part!

Agincourt Church  
Hockey League is  
looking for players!



This non-competitive, non-contact, in-expensive league provides house league hockey, skills development and fellowship to boys and girls each Friday night at Commander Park Arena.

For more information, call 416-410-4113

## Need to get to Church a little earlier?

The SMUC Church  
Choir is a great way  
to start your day on  
Sunday!



If you can read music and enjoy singing, come join us! The good times and musical fellowship start at 9:45 and we are always the first to enjoy coffee and treats before the Service!

Contact Ginny, she's at the organ.