

The Harcourt Herald

*The life and work of the Harcourt Memorial United Church
Guelph, Ontario Canada*



**Wellington
Circles**

**Time for New Year's
Resolutions!**

**Nearly There! Reno
Update**

January 2018

Harcourt Memorial United Church

An Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Canada

We are a people of God called together and sent forth by Christ to

Seek | Connect | Act

Our Mission:

Inspired by the Spirit, we participate in Christian practices that strengthen us in the building of just, compassionate, and non-violent relationships

Our Vision Statement:

To be an authentic community of spiritual growth and service

Our Core Values:

Risk...Respect...Responsibility...Vulnerability...Trust

Our Purpose:

To welcome and strengthen in community all who wish to serve God and follow the way of Jesus

Harcourt Memorial United Church

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The Harcourt Herald

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by the

Communications Committee

Your contributions are welcome!

**Deadline: 20th of each month
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The Ministers' Quill

by Miriam Flynn

...the rain and snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth... ISAIAH 55:10

New Year's Resolution: Book A Snow Day

Do you remember, as a child, the exceptional winter morning when you would wake to find your parents listening with rapt attention to the radio and then receive the joyful news that school had been cancelled for the day? Aw, the delicious respite of a “snow day” -- when the ordinary business of weekday life was suddenly suspended beneath the gentle imposition of a blanket of white powder. Snow days meant slow starts when you could dally over breakfast in your pajamas and “help” outside by building sturdy snow forts with your friends as the adults of the neighbourhood shoveled the walkways and the drives.

Being snowbound can be an oddly liberating experience for adults as well. It temporarily diverts us from the forward momentum of our routine commitments - offering us fresh perspective on the exceptional beauty that surrounds us in the everyday and surprising us with the unexpected gift of time to be present to family and neighbours in ways that naturally seem to foster co-operation and camaraderie. Snow days stop us in our tracks and release us from the grip of assumed imperatives.

As the new year begins, we may be tempted to move quickly from the busy-ness of the holiday season to the “to-doing” of resolutions, goal-setting and new agendas. Perhaps, as we begin to fill in the pages of our day-timers and virtual calendars for 2018 we ought to consider placing a big “X” squarely in the middle of a week in early January and boldly declare it a “Snow Day.” We could resolve to take a single day of mid-winter vacation and resolutely turn down all duties and social obligations that would take us beyond our abodes. We could decide to pause for a day and read a novel, watch the bird feeder, have a long conversation with a neighbour or play a game with a child.

And perhaps we could set aside solitary time during our “Snow Day” for reflection and prayer – allowing ourselves to be stopped in our tracks and released from the grip of assumed imperatives long enough to *notice* and gain fresh spiritual perspective. Suddenly suspended



under the gentle imposition of unhurried quiet, we might experience the presence of God as we reflect upon our life's journey over the past year, notice the unique pattern of our spirituality that particular day and discern those places the Spirit is calling us forward into new life.

As the new year dawns, may our community of faith remain open to the lessons of snow days: the loving concern for neighbour they evoke; the surprising space for wonder they inspire and the detour along quiet paths of contemplation they make possible.

Worship Schedule

Three welcoming Sunday services

Harcourt offers three distinct Sunday morning services: At 9 a.m. in the Chapel, at 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary, and MANNA service at 10:30 a.m. in the Friendship Room.

Chapel service

The Chapel service features prayers, readings, singing, and a message. It is quiet and meditative. There is no choir or special children's program. Tea and coffee are served following the service, and some participants gather for additional guided reflection.

Sanctuary service

The Sanctuary service closely follows the Chapel service, but also includes the Harcourt choir with piano and guitar accompaniment, and occasionally the handbell choir and flutes. **Nursery support is provided in the nursery from 10 a.m. until 12 noon.** Tea and coffee are served in the gym after the service.

MANNA

Is a friendly, all-ages, interactive, alternative worship experience that involves hands-on activities and sharing. It takes place in the Friendship Room, also at 10:30 a.m.

by Lorraine Holding, Chair of Council

Year endings and year beginnings! Once again, we move through the seasons and the many activities of our ministries through Harcourt. Council met on December 10 to continue our input into the 2018 budget. We identified the need for a specific budget line to provide some flexibility to assist with carrying out priorities identified through our Harcourt 20/20 process. Plans will explore: “radical hospitality” (intentional welcoming); what a Community Support Facilitator might do; a process to review and imagine uses of our building’s spaces; resources to support family ministry (including children to young adults). These priorities require connection and collaboration across many parts of Harcourt. Council and committees/teams are catalysts to start the conversations. We even planted the seed that maybe a new budget structure might be better for 2019.

Council has one more responsibility to vote on decisions from General Council 42 (2015). On January 21, we will meet at noon in the Chapel to discuss Remit 6 – One Order of Ministry. We welcome anyone who is interested in this issue to join us while we prepare for our vote at our February meeting. What is the proposed change?

There should be one new order of ministry encompassing the present categories of recognized designated lay ministers, diaconal ministers, and ordained ministers, with ordination to the ministry of word, sacrament, education, service and pastoral care as the single rite of entry, and with provision for the continued identity of the diakonia within the ordained ministry?

You can find background documents, including study guides, at www.gc42.ca/remits

Council’s challenge to fill vacancies will continue until our annual meeting on March 4. It is important that the Umbrella Councillors for Christian Life, Outreach, and Congregational Life are in place to provide balanced perspectives in all of Council’s work. New leadership in the roles of Vice-Chair and Chair (or Co-Chairs) is also a key opportunity to learn and contribute. Again, I offer my personal invitation to chat with YOU to explore these five possibilities. Send me your questions and/or interest: councilchair@harcourtuc.ca. As we begin 2018, we look forward in anticipation. Guided by the Spirit, may we continue to share and serve as we strengthen this community we call Harcourt.

With faith and hope.

New to Harcourt? Welcome!

An Affirming Ministry and proud member of the United Church of Canada and Guelph United Ministries, Harcourt welcomes everyone.



Seek . Connect. Act



What's the Buzz?

- **Emmanuel United Church in Waterloo Moves On After Graffiti Incident**

About 100 community members from around the region gathered outside Emmanuel United Church in Waterloo in early December to watch the congregation hang a new pride flag on the front of the building. The event was held just days after the church — along with Parkminster United Church in Waterloo — discovered graffiti on the building and across stained glass windows. <https://www.therecord.com/news-story/7976798-community-rallies-to-support-vandalized-waterloo-church/>

- **Nothing Like a Christmas Google**

According to Google Trends, Albertans were more interested than Canadians living elsewhere to search online in December for pages related to Mary, Nativity of Jesus, and Saint Joseph. <http://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/albertans-are-searching-google-for-jesus-more-than-the-rest-of-canada>

- **Moderator Thanks Prime Minister for Reaffirming Position**

The United Church of Canada supports Palestinian, Israeli, and U.S. partner calls for the current status quo arrangements in Jerusalem to remain until just negotiations resolve its status. On December 15, Moderator Jordan Cantwell wrote to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, thanking him for reaffirming Canada's existing position regarding Jerusalem, and calling on Canada to remain firmly in support of the status quo until just negotiations resolve the status of Jerusalem. <http://www.united-church.ca/news/united-church-supports-partners-jerusalem-status-quo>

Committee & Group News

Caroline Harcourt Women Invited Behind the Scenes

by Jean Hume

The Christmas meeting was attended by 43 members and guests. Joan Charlebois sang and played and told of the Christmas cultural traditions on Cape Breton Island. She was accompanied by Lynn Hancock. The program was both fun and peaceful and was, by all the positive feedback, greatly appreciated by all who attended.

The next Caroline Harcourt Women's Fellowship meeting will be on Monday, **January 8th** at 12 noon. Jill Gill will be speaking on "Behind the Scenes at Chalmers". All women are welcome. Bring your bag lunch and tea and "calorie free" treats will be served!!!!

Nearly There: Update on the Washroom Reno

by Dave Hume, Chair, Building Committee

We're in the home stretch. Today (Dec. 19) the tile is being finished on the walls in the new washrooms and the ceiling lights are being installed. The plumbing is being finished under the ceiling in the boiler room and all the other plumbing is finished and tested. The trenches for the rest of the new plumbing have all been backfilled and covered with concrete. The plumbing outside the west doors of the Greeting Place has been finished and backfilled and the sidewalk was finished with paving blocks. A new tile floor has been laid in the Royal City Pre-School area and a new sink was installed yesterday. The sink in Darko's utility room was re-installed. There is also a new floor in the Manna Storeroom and some of the cupboards went back into that room yesterday for the Quilting Group. I met yesterday with Unto Kihlanki (architect) and Curtis Donnahee (contractor) and we settled on a completion date of Feb. 7th. The total cost, I estimate, is going to come in at about \$275,000. The actual cost of the washrooms will be only slightly above the \$175,000 budgeted. The big cost overrun is mainly due to removal of asbestos from plumbing and floors plus rerouting the sanitary sewer system to bypass a broken sewer line underneath the Greeting Place. The Building Committee will be starting a campaign after the project is finished to begin to rebuild the Property Pillar finances. The Property Pillar is intended to act as a buffer in case of major capital expenditures, like those we are now finishing.

The Journey Continues Regarding Indigenous History and Peoples

by Arlene Davies-Fuhr, Justice & Outreach

Some folks from Harcourt are planning a road trip to visit to The Woodland Cultural Centre in Brantford on Saturday, **January 13**. There will be an opportunity to see the Indigenous museum and also see The Mush Hole (the Indigenous term for the Mohawk Institute residential school) workshop performance that takes place from 3-5 pm. The cost is pay-what-you-can. This event honours and acknowledges the lives and spirits of those who were at the Mohawk Institute. If you'd like more information and/or would like to car pool to the event, please contact Arlene Davies-Fuhr at abfuhr@teksavvy.com.

Harcourt Men's Group

by Bill Lord

The Harcourt men's Group will meet on Wednesday morning, **January 10th** at 8 am In the Friendship Room. Coffee and tea will be ready at 7:45. The speaker will be Sandy Middleton on the topic: What if's? (A life retrospective). Murray Woods will be in charge of the program All men are welcome to attend and you are encouraged to bring a friend or neighbour who would enjoy the session. Please record the date of February 14 for the next meeting.

DON'T FORGET POTLUCK SUPPER NIGHT

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20TH

5:30 P.M.

IN THE FRIENDSHIP ROOM

The Church Year 2018



Cartoon by Roz Stephenson

An Invitation to Hear About the Guelph Wellington Circles Program

by Jill Gill

The Harcourt Justice and Outreach Committee is hosting an event on **January 28th** from noon-1 p.m. for members of the congregation who would like to hear about a strategy being used in Guelph to aid folks who live in poverty to help themselves and their families to become self-sufficient. Please join us for an information session regarding the Guelph Wellington Circles Program. Circles is a community-based initiative that creates relationships across economic boundaries. It matches people of low-income who have attended the Getting Ahead program with people of middle- and upper-income who have attended Bridges Out of Poverty training. The program has been used in dozens of communities in Canada and the US and has proven to be making real and on-going changes for individuals and our community. We will be joined by a couple of folks from this congregation who currently participate as 'Allies' in Circles and a community 'Leader' who is making significant changes in her life through the Circles network.

Come along to be inspired and learn about how you might wish to participate in this very worthwhile endeavor. For more details, please contact Arlene Davies-Fuhr or Edna Miller.

Finding God in Everyday Life: An Autumn Prayer Series at Wellington Park Retirement Residence

by Kathy Magee

On behalf of the Spiritual Life Committee I had the privilege of facilitating a six-week prayer series with some residence at Wellington Park Retirement Residence in November and December. The incentive for this Autumn Prayer Series came from a Lenten Prayer Series that we had shared in the winter. The participants had identified the importance of sharing their stories with other people of faith, and how few opportunities there were to do that once they were no longer able to attend their home churches. For six Friday mornings, twelve to sixteen of us, including a core group of four or five "Harcourt people", met in their lovely gathering space and spent an hour sharing stories of our faith journeys.

Using the sacred listening circle format, and a variety of forms of prayer, the focus was on a different theme and grace each week. The members of the group were a remarkable example of the power of listening and being listened to. Compassion, acceptance, humour, and love filled the room as each person explained and explored the significant aspects of their experience as faithful Christians throughout their long lives. They shared fresh and long standing grief, deep longings, past challenges, present changes and losses, areas of vulnerability, sources of support, and the foundations of their faith. Woven into all their narratives was the thread of awareness of God's steadfast love and the importance of their faith communities. It was an honour to

witness the depth and breadth of their trust in God, commitment to sharing God's love, and their ability to adapt to life's challenges. The group expressed the hope that we will do a similar series during the long winter months.

This form of spiritual outreach is such a precious gift - for those participating and for the Harcourt congregation as a whole. One of the members of the group told me she had never been to Harcourt, but knew it must be a special place if this is the kind of work we are doing. It is a chance for us to be God's love and light in the world outside our church doors. It is one way in which we live out our vision and mission.

Community

Knock, Knock. Who's There? Doesn't Matter Because It's Annual Report Time!

by Anne Purkis, Church Administrator



Your assistance is needed to ensure Harcourt has a complete and accurate Annual Report!

The end of the year is rapidly approaching and with it comes the task of assembling Harcourt's Annual Report. Committee/Team Chairs and Group Leaders/Co-ordinators are asked to submit a brief report reflecting what happened on their committee/team or in their group during 2017. The information in these reports also assists in compiling the statistics required by the United Church of

Canada. If you have offered a group, big or small, be sure to include the numbers of the participants and, in the case of children and youth, the ages as well. Be sure to count the leaders, facilitators and organizers in those numbers.

Report Guidelines

- Please keep your submission to 1/2 - 3/4 of a page. Your article will be edited as necessary.
- Create your report as a word doc and use Arial 12 font. Please keep fancy formatting to a minimum as I will be re-formatting the reports so that they are all set-up the same way.
- Submit your report by email to office@harcourtuc.ca with the document attached.

Committee/Team Chairs: Submit a report that includes names of the people on your committee/team, the Chair(s) and some of your 2017 highlights. If you have members that have left or joined your committee/team during the year please include them with the date they left or joined.

Group Leaders/Co-ordinators: Submit a report that including the number of participants in your group, when you meet and some of your 2017 highlights.

The deadline is **January 12th, 2018**.

Need help? There are extra copies of past annual reports in the church office if you would like to see examples of past submissions or ask Anne for assistance. Thanks!

The Wisdom of the Lectionary

by Andre Auger

I have just completed a commentary on each of the Gospels for all three years of the Lectionary. I started this some four years ago when the Christian Formation Committee had finished its position paper “A Call to Discipleship,” and noted that the primary responsibility for the Christian education of children lay with parents, not with the church, and that we needed to develop materials for parents to refer to as they went about the critical task of introducing children to the “good news” of our faith.



Painting by Hans Memling - Public Domain - Wiki Commons

I began the process of producing a weekly email for all parents of young children based on the Lectionary. I had never really paid much attention to the Lectionary before, and gradually realized that it contained huge wisdom. Not only was there a clear cycle to the major feasts of the liturgical year, but there was brilliance in the way the Gospel readings were laid out week by week, building a theme throughout the year: we celebrate Jesus and his life and ministry, and we learn to carry his project of an alternative culture based on compassion and distributive justice in our own time.

By the time I had finished the Gospel commentaries for Year “A,” Harcourt had moved on, and we had created

MANNA, an intergenerational experiential worship experience, and had integrated our Sunday School program into it. I decided to carry on and produce a similar commentary on the Gospels of Years “B” and “C,” for possible use at MANNA. Writing these ended up being a sophisticated production line: I would produce a draft for a bunch of Sundays. Then I would fire them off to Jim, who would review them, and pass along his comments. I would then prepare a revision, including Jim's suggestions, and then send the section off to the MANNA Planning Team, who would use what they wanted in order to plan worship.

I was so taken by the beauty and wisdom of the year-long pedagogical experience that I decided to add some summaries so that busy people could catch a glimpse of the thrust of the argument over time. The more I worked on this material, the more I came to feel that congregations would be well-served by paying closer attention to the flow of the message: it's all there! Everything you might ever have wanted to know about Jesus' vision of God's Dream for humanity can be found, as, Sunday after Sunday, the lessons are systematically worked out.

Each Year is different; one Year focuses on the Gospel of Mark, another Year the Gospel of Matthew, and a third on that of Luke, with the Gospel of John built in at key strategic moments throughout all three. The most important strategic point I discovered is that the creators of the Lectionary use the Sundays after Pentecost to bring it all home: Jesus is gone, and yet still with us, and here is, step by step, how we are to carry on Jesus' project. (Of course, most of this gets lost on us because the Season of Pentecost occurs over the summer, when we let down our guard and set the Lectionary aside...)

I have little idea of the eventual value of these commentaries. The work was meaningful to me. I see the flow; I get the message; I can't plead ignorance any longer: I know what is expected of me. The most instructive experience was to read the Gospel for the final Sunday in the Year “C” cycle – the Reign of Christ. One would expect something triumphant, to match the songs we typically sing on this Sunday. Instead, we get the dialogue between Jesus and the thief as they are both dying in agony on their crosses. What, after all, does the thief see in this “loser” dying next to him? Why does he believe that it is worth everything for him to hold on to this dying Jesus? I learned that our faith does not live off a theology of glory, but off a theology of the cross: Jesus as the Christ is triumphant only when we get our hands dirty in this world, and get on with the healing and the feeding and the advocacy for all.



MINUTE FOR MISSION

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Mark 12:31

The Beatles’ song “All You Need Is Love” is on my mind. The song is about love being everything you need and at the centre of our doing, singing, knowing, playing. While the song is short on details of what that looks like, scripture provides examples: the man who cares for the one who has been beaten and robbed; the woman who provides hospitality for the disciples. What does it mean today to love our neighbours? Perhaps the starting point is to acknowledge that people all over the world are our neighbours. People we will never meet because of distance or different circles of community, people who share space with us but whom we do not actually see, and people we know and love—they are all our neighbours. The Mission & Service stories in the 2018 issue of Minutes for Mission focus on stories of loving our neighbours near and far.

Our gifts for Mission & Service enable ministries that truly fulfill the great commandment. Whether it is an act of service or advocacy, Mission & Service ministries speak and act lovingly of the dignity of all humanity and creation. To see with a compassionate gaze and offer compassionate service and advocacy—that is at the heart of our Mission & Service. May these stories draw you closer to each other.

Blessings,

Cheryl Curtis Manager, Mission & Service Giving

Help out some of Guelph's Most Vulnerable Citizens

by Ann Middleton

Chalmers Community Services provides food, referral to social service agencies and support to some of the most vulnerable people in our community. Currently, close to 400 people use the services of this non-profit every week at two locations, one downtown and the other at Three Willows.

Those who visit Chalmers include families, seniors, students, disabled, homeless and unemployed individuals. Some need the service only once or twice, others many times over many years.

A simple way to help this organization is to donate eggs and cheese the fourth Sunday of every month. Just bring them to church on Jan. 28 and we will have coolers at the ready.

If you are unable to attend, a cheque made out to Chalmers Community Services, % the church, will help buy food.



Wait. Watch. Wonder. Waken. All Things Christmas 2017

by Janet Webster

These four words related to Advent certainly resonated with those working on the latest All Things Christmas event.

We wait to see if it will come together and **wonder** if there will be enough greenery, volunteers, customers, baking.....

We **watch** the weather forecasts... when will it be comfortable to cut boughs of cedar and dogwood branches at the Morris farm? It is much more pleasant in cool, dry conditions than in rain, snow, freezing temperatures which we have seen other years! Our only marginal day this year was the one we set aside to harvest a pine tree at the Crowe farm but thankfully the heavy rain let up enough so that we were able to work between showers.

We **watch** and **wonder** as talented friends create seasonal pieces for outdoor displays, doorways, swags, and indoor arrangements.

We **wait** until we open the doors and Wonderful...there is a line-up of eager visitors.

We **watch** as people oohh and aaah over the beautiful arrangements on offer, the treasure or piece of jewelry they discover and a reindeer to adopt. Then of course there are the amazing items at the bake table!

We **watch** and **wonder** with delight at the people visiting over coffee and fresh muffins.

And when it is all over, the cleaning up complete, we **waken** to such rewarding results!

The atmosphere was joyous during the sale and when we added up the financial results, we had added over \$6200 to Harcourt funds.

The small group who run this event will meet in January to de-brief and make suggestions for another year. One major suggestion is directed to you. It would be so much less stressful if we could divide up some of the planning! The team have developed some great strategies and have many guidelines to share with new volunteers.

Here are some of the tasks which could mean a small commitment of time and or effort on your part:



Reindeer building (you choose time & place; we have instructions)



Prepare pots with soil for arrangements



Organize the jewelry table



Harvest greenery / natural material such as teasels, (could be 2 or more groups)



Distribute signs on site and nearby corners



Create “picks” e.g. cones on sticks, wooden “lollipops” (can be done ahead of time)



Facility manager (book spaces, unlock, table set up, cleanup)



Publish reminders in our Harcourt media



Assist with bake table



Organize, gather and sell treasures



Plan, serve coffee tea, treats



Co-ordinate wholesale supply order

And one more (tongue in cheek) request— mark the date on your 2018 calendar so if you are thinking of special events or trips, you keep the 24th of November free. That way you can share in this delightful and rewarding tradition at Harcourt!



Whoohoo!

by Lynn Hancock

Lots to celebrate folks!

When I think of the first Harcourt Christmas sale I attended in 2013 (my moving Date was Dec.12, 2013) I remember how friendly the volunteers were. I don't remember much about the focus or contents. Since then, I have been impressed. By how this event has evolved. It's great to be able to offer something different and unique at Harcourt. When I saw Judi arrive on Thursday with her horse trailer FILLED with branches, I had to pinch myself. (Having attended a cathedral style church in the Bloor West village of Toronto with only residential parking). Wow!

How lucky are we! Then I witnessed so many volunteers on Thursday and Friday willing to share their gifts. Each one contributing something different and significant. As long as we have access to these extraordinary natural and human resources, I say let's continue with this tradition. I'm seeing the benefits of continuing to adapt, adjust and Accommodate. Yesterday, I spent some time outside in the parking lot. I saw LOTS of happy faces as they returned to their cars (for the second and third time). A real win, win, win! With respect and appreciation to ALL!



Announcements

Passing:



Crispin, Maxine - passed away peacefully at home on November 25th at age 90 surrounded by her loving family, friends and devoted caregivers of Arbour Trails. Wife of Dr. Edward Crispin (deceased), Maxine was a teacher of nursing and long time associate Librarian at the Ontario Veterinary College. A memorial celebration will be held at Harcourt Church, 87 Dean Avenue Guelph on **Friday, January 5th** at 1pm. In lieu of flowers, contributions would be accepted to Harcourt Memorial United Church or the Alzheimer Society.



James, Diana - passed away on Monday, November 27th. Born in Hamilton, Diana was the daughter of Jack and Pearl Matthews. Much loved wife, mother and grandmother. Diana worked as a secretary at Willow Road Public School in Guelph for 24 years. She was a member of Harcourt United Church for many years and enjoyed travelling, gardening and most importantly spending time with family and friends. As expressions of sympathy, donations to the Parkinson's Foundation or Lewy Body Dementia Association would be appreciated.



Kaufman, Gord - passed away on November 23rd, 2017 in his 89th year. Gord was the husband of Ruth (Robertson) for more than 67 years. He is survived by 6 children, 14 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren. Gord was a lifetime educator teaching at schools in Oxford County, Timmins, Brantford, Cobourg, and Guelph. He was a proud social democrat, active in the CCF and the NDP wherever he lived. Together with Ruth, he travelled the world and never passed on an opportunity to take a spin on the dance floor. In lieu of flowers please consider making a donation to a cause or charity of your choice. A tree will be planted in memory of Gordon C. Kaufman in the Wall-Custance Memorial Forest, University of Guelph Arboretum. Dedication service, Sunday, **September 16, 2018** at 2:30 pm.



Pipes, Margaret Jean (nee Beesley) - passed away on December 17th. Much loved wife of Bill Pipes, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, Jean entered the world as a tiny 3lb baby girl in 1926 in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. Placed in a little container of blankets on the oven door to be kept warm, this little peanut of a girl survived and thrived. Living with husband Bill and family in Moose Jaw, Winnipeg, Edmonton, again Winnipeg and then to Guelph & St. Thomas, Jean gave the family skills to embrace moves and still maintain and nurture friendships always. Jean began Arts courses at the University of Guelph in retirement years, and at the age of 89 she started taking singing lessons. Jean contributed in the United Churches across Canada, to women's groups, Sunday Schools, Vacation Bible Schools, church choirs, worship planning, church committees and always Outreach and Stewardship. Those thinking of a memorial gift to honor Jeans' life may consider a pledge to First United Church, World Vision Canada, The Friends of Algonquin Park or of choice.

Behind the Scenes

by Gillian Joseph

This past year was an amazing year in the 'big picture' sense – not to mention a tad scary. There were military threats and actions, withdrawals from economic unions, terror attacks, serious environmental woes, destructive fires, missiles zooming overhead, hurricanes, shootings, fights for cultural independence, military coups and much, much more. For Pete's sake even Sears went under in Canada. What the Sears? Who would have believed that would have happened 10 years ago?! I feel like wrapping a black band around all of our many Sears appliances. Such economic and social instability makes me feel that drawing up some new year's resolutions this year may be completely pointless! I mean if we're all going to hell in a hand basket what difference would it make if I stop eating so much chocolate?!

Craig Hamilton-Parker is a so called 'psychic' who has been elevated in status recently because of his correct predictions about significant developments in geopolitics. He not only predicted Brexit well before it happened, but he also predicted that Donald Trump would become President in 2016. For 2018 his predictions are pretty much 'more of the same' – sending the ostriches amongst us to scramble toward a sandy patch where we can bury our heads. However, among the many dire predictions that Hamilton-Parker has made, there is a glimmer of hope. He also suggests that in 2018 there will be a simultaneous growth in

spirituality for the people of the world that will lead us into a golden age. Conflict and hardship, plus growing environmental problems, says Hamilton-Parker, will bring good people together, igniting a desire to seek out the true purpose of human life. I'm not sure that I believe in psychics, but this sounds like something worth thinking about. Spirituality, coming together, finding a purpose. Sounds good to me.

In his letter to the Romans (8:18), Paul states: "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed to us". However, some versions of the bible show the ending of this passage to read "the glory that will be revealed in us". If we accept the latter translation, then it puts the responsibility for peace squarely upon our own shoulders. In other words, we can't sit back and let psychics be right about the awful things that are going to happen in the world. We need to look inside ourselves to find the glory - to pull out all of our talents and skills and resources, no matter how small. We each need to make an effort, a commitment, to make this world a better place. The only way that these dire predictions about 2018 will happen is if we, collectively, let them. Yes, I'm only one person – with little control over what is happening in the big picture sense of the world. But here's my one resolution for 2018 in scary times: I'm going to try to make a difference – no matter how small. One drop of water joined with others will eventually make an ocean. Are you with me?

Happy New Year!

Harcourt Calendar – January 2018

Updated December 12, 2017—www.harcourtuc.ca for most up-to-date information

Monday January 1

New Year's Day

Church/Office Closed

Tuesday January 2

Office Closed

6:45pm Cubs [G]

7:00pm Handbell Ringers [M]

Wednesday January 3

1:30pm Tai Chi [F]

6:45pm Beavers [G]

7:30pm Rainbow Chorus Rehearsal [S]

Thursday January 4

8:45am Mindstretch [202]

9:00am Stroke Recovery Executive [F]

11:00am Staff Meeting

1:30pm Park'n Dance [G/F]

7:30pm Choir Practice [M]

Friday January 5

1:00pm Memorial Service for Maxine Crispin [S]

Saturday January 6

10:00am Rainbow Chorus Rehearsal [S]

Sunday January 7

9:00am Worship [C]

10:30am Worship [S]

10:30am "Manna" Service [G/F]

Monday January 8

Office Closed

11:45am Caroline Harcourt Women's Fellowship [F]

7:00pm Women's Spirituality [C]

7:00pm Scouts [G]

Tuesday January 9

6:45pm Cubs [G]

7:00pm Worship Committee [C]

7:00pm Finance Committee [202]

7:00pm Handbell Ringers [M]

Wednesday January 10

7:45am Men's Group [F]

1:30pm Tai Chi [F]

6:30pm Guides [F]

6:45pm Beavers [G]

7:00pm Ministry & Personnel Committee [L]

7:00pm Property Committee [C]

7:30pm Rainbow Chorus Rehearsal [S]

Thursday January 11

8:45am Mindstretch [202]

11:00am Staff Meeting

1:30pm Park'n Dance [G/F]

7:00pm Creative Intentions [F]

7:30pm Choir Practice [M]

Friday January 12

7:00pm Junior Youth Group [G]

Saturday January 13

10:00am Explorations in Progressive Christianity [202]

Sunday January 14

9:00am Worship [C]

10:30am Worship Service [S]

10:30am "Manna" Service [G/F]

1:30pm Planning For Your Health Care Future [G/F/S]

7:30pm High School Youth Group [202/203]

Monday January 15

Office Closed

1:30pm Prayer Shawl Group [202]

7:00pm Scouts [G]

Tuesday January 16

11:30am Stroke Recovery Lunch [F]

6:45 Cubs [G]

7:00pm Handbell Ringers [M]

Wednesday January 17

1:30pm Tai Chi [F]
6:30pm Preschool Toy Wash [K]
6:30pm Guides [F]
6:45pm Beavers [G]
7:00pm Rainbow Chorus Tech Rehearsal [S]

Thursday January 18

8:45am Mindstretch [202]
11:00am Staff Meeting
1:30pm Park'n Dance [G/F]
7:00pm Sharing Evenings [F]
7:30pm Choir Practice [M]

Saturday January 20

10:00am Explorations in Progressive Christianity [202]
10:30am UNICEF Meeting [F]
5:30pm Potluck and Games Night [F]

Sunday January 21

9:00am Worship [C]
10:30am Worship [S]
10:30am "Manna" Service [G/F]
12pm Council Meeting [C]

Monday January 22**Office Closed**

9:30am Quilting Group [F]
1:30pm Prayer Shawl Group [202]
7:00pm Scouts [G]

Tuesday January 23

11:30am Ministry & Personnel Staff Lunch [F]
1:30pm GUM Pastoral Care Meeting [C]
6:45pm Cubs [G]
7:00pm Handbell Ringers [M]

Wednesday January 24

1:30pm Tai Chi [F]
6:30pm Guides [F]
6:45pm Beavers [G]
7:00pm Council Meeting [C]
7:00pm Rainbow Chorus Dress Rehearsal [S]

Thursday January 25

8:45am Mindstretch [202]
11:00am Staff Meeting
1:30pm Park'n Dance [G/F]
7:30pm Choir Practice [M]

Friday January 26

8:00am PA Day Camp Les Petites Pommes [F]
7:00pm Junior Youth Group [G]

Saturday January 27

10:00am Explorations in Progressive Christianity [202]
7:30pm Rainbow Chorus Concert [S]

Sunday January 28

9:00am Worship [C]
10:30am Worship [S]
10:30am "Manna" Service [G/F]
7:30pm High School Youth Group [202/203]

Monday January 29

1:30pm Prayer Shawl Group [202]
7:00pm Scouts [G]

Tuesday January 30

6:45pm Cubs [G]
7:00pm Handbell Ringers [M]

Wednesday January 31

1:30pm Tai Chi [F]
6:30pm Guides [F]
6:45pm Beavers [G]
7:00pm Rainbow Chorus Registration & Rehearsal [S]