

# The Harcourt Herald

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



December, 2019

# 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

87 Dean Avenue, Guelph, Ontario N1G 1L3

#### Office Hours:

Tuesday to Friday, 9am-Noon. 1pm-4pm

Phone: 519-824-4177 ; Fax: 519-824-9448

E-mail: [Office@harcourtuc.ca](mailto:Office@harcourtuc.ca)

Web: [www.harcourtuc.ca](http://www.harcourtuc.ca)

**Ministers:** The People, with

Reverend Miriam Flynn (ext. 222)

[Miriam@harcourtuc.ca](mailto:Miriam@harcourtuc.ca)

Reverend Jim Ball (ext. 223)

[Jim@harcourtuc.ca](mailto:Jim@harcourtuc.ca)

Director of Music Ministry:

Alison MacNeil (ext. 225)

[Alison@harcourtuc.ca](mailto:Alison@harcourtuc.ca)

Church Administrator: Wendy Guilmette  
Worship, Communication & Technical

Support: Shaina Ensing

Custodian: Darko Cikovic

*The Harcourt Herald is published 10 times each year (in paper and digital formats) by the Communications Committee.*

<https://www.harcourtuc.ca/space-resources/harcourt-herald/>

*Your contributions are welcome!*

Deadline: 20<sup>th</sup> of each month, Sept-June

Editor: Gillian Joseph

[theherald@harcourtuc.ca](mailto:theherald@harcourtuc.ca)





## **The Ministers' Quill**

by the Right Rev. Richard Bott, Moderator of UCC

**There is no Silent Night,  
when a little one is ripped  
from their parent's arms.**

**The keepers of the sheep will not hear the angels'  
"Glory to God in the Highest,"  
over the guns of war.**

**The Wise Ones  
will not be able to see the star,  
when the skies are filled  
with the LED signs,  
proclaiming, "more, More, MORE!"**

**The Christ-child is born,  
in bus shelter,  
in prison cell,  
at border fence,  
in shelled-out hovel.**

**The Christ-child is born,  
again, and again, and again.**

**The Christ-child is born.**

**Are we willing to meet the Child;  
and, in meeting,  
change our world?**

**Are we willing to change the world,  
and, in changing,  
meet the Child?**

# ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE



## Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup> – Advent I: Hope

9:00 am - In the Chapel  
10:30 am – In the Sanctuary  
10:30 am – MANNA, all ages experiential worship in the Friendship Room  
Nursery care is available at the 10:30 services



## Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup> – Advent II: Peace

9:00 am - In the Chapel  
10:30 am – In the Sanctuary  
10:30 am – MANNA, all ages experiential worship in the Friendship Room  
Nursery care is available at the 10:30 services



## Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup> – Advent III: Joy

9:00 am - In the Chapel  
10:30 am - In the Sanctuary  
10:30 am - MANNA, Spiral Meditation (all ages worship) in the Friendship Room  
Nursery care is available at the 10:30 services



## Sunday, December 22<sup>nd</sup> – Advent IV: Love

9:00 am - In the Chapel  
10:30 am - In the Sanctuary  
10:30 am - MANNA, Breakfast and Carol Singing (all ages) in the Friendship Room  
Nursery care is available at the 10:30 services



## Tuesday, December 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve

4:00 pm – Family service. Come celebrate the Christmas Story.  
10:00 pm, Candlelight, Carols and Communion Service



## Wednesday December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day

**NOTE: 10:00 am** Lay Led Service



## Sunday, December 29

10:00 am: Christmas 1  
Nursery Care Available

# Council News

by Lorraine Holding, Council Chair



As 2019 reaches year-end, Council focused on planning for the New Year at our November 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. On behalf of Finance Committee, Kent Hoeg presented a draft budget for 2020. Work on budget planning will continue as we consider the impact of this year's possible deficit and requirements for the year ahead. Harcourt depends on significant financial support through regular givings, rentals and fundraising initiatives. The Harcourt congregation is facing difficult questions: What do we appreciate and value that spurs us to contribute financially? What are some impact scenarios if financial sustainability is uncertain? What does this say about our positioning within our three narratives: radical change; revitalization; slow death? Council plans to share more information with the congregation early in 2020, prior to our Annual Meeting on Sunday, March 1.

Harcourt also depends on the significant time, energy and talent support of many people. Volunteers for Council, committees/teams, and a wide variety of short-term tasks are another essential part of continued sustainability. Here too, difficult questions face the Harcourt congregation: What do we appreciate and value that spurs us to contribute as a volunteer? What are some impact scenarios if people do not volunteer, particularly for leadership roles on Council and committees/teams? What does this say about our positioning within our three narratives? Council plans to keep recruitment efforts visible, leading to appointments at the Annual Meeting. Did you chat with us at our November 24<sup>th</sup> coffee time? Please contact any of us to pursue your personal interests, energies and involvement at Harcourt.

Council discussed initial next steps for the Sanctuary seating project. We need interested people to work on implementation planning. Watch for information about small task groups in January.

We thank and congratulate Lisette Vanderkamp and Suzanne Webster as recipients of the Baillie Volunteer Service Award. This award recognizes their leadership of Harcourt's two youth groups and is presented by the United Church of Canada to young adult volunteers. Presentation will take place at a Sunday service. We also thank Merrill Pierce for submitting their nomination.

As we enter the season of Advent and prepare for Christmas, I offer my gratitude to all who contribute to our Harcourt community. Blessings to all for comfort and peace while we reflect on our accomplishments and dreams. With faith and hope.



## The Neighbourhood Lens

### Tiny but Meaningful

A Canadian organization is building tiny house communities for homeless veterans <https://www.cnn.com/2019/10/29/us/canada-veteran-housing-complex/index.html>

### United Church of Canada Challenges Down Syndrome Stereotypes

An article in the UCC BROADVIEW presents a beautiful photo essay that challenges Down Syndrome stereotypes. <https://broadview.org/down-syndrome-more-to-me/>

### CBC Offers Green Advice in Weekly Newsletter on *All Things Environmental*

Check out: How grocery stores could produce less plastic waste.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/what-on-earth-newsletter-grocery-stories-plastic-waste-1.5359710>

### Edible Spiritual Art

Make some beautiful Stained-Glass Cookies for Christmas.

<https://www.cookingclassy.com/stained-glass-cookies/>

### Body Prayers for the Advent Season

Why not try out *body prayers* for the Advent Season. Visit the United Church of Canada's website for examples (see interview with Kathy Magee, Spiritual Companion, below to find out about what is a body prayer). <https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/body-prayers.pdf>

### Bah Humbug!

The Concerned Residents Coalition (CRC) presents a dramatic reading of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* by CBC's Judy Maddren on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m., hosted by the congregation of Ebenezer United Church on the Guelph Line.

<https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/judy-maddren-to-read-a-christmas-carol-at-ebenezer-united-church-1880131>

# COMMITTEE AND GROUP NEWS

## **Festive Flowers for Christmas Worship**

by Barb Friend, Chair Chancel Committee

We will once again be continuing our tradition of placing poinsettias in the Chapel and Sanctuary for the December 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> services. If you would like to place flowers in remembrance of a loved one or to honor a special occasion, please contact Barb Friend by December 9<sup>th</sup>. Home #: 519-763-5032; Cell #: 519-803-5032; email:

[barfriend52@gmail.com](mailto:barfriend52@gmail.com)



PS. You are welcome to take your poinsettia home after the 10:30 service on December 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## **An Eco-spiritual Practice for Advent**

by Andre Auger, Spiritual Life Committee

This Advent, as well as throughout the coming liturgical year, the Spiritual Life Committee will continue to produce events to maintain Harcourt's focus on eco-spirituality. Before Advent starts, you will receive from Jim a set of four brief reflections on each Sunday's Gospel from an ecological perspective. You are invited to spend some time, prior to each Sunday service, to reflect on the theme, and jot down some of your thoughts and insights. We would suggest you bring the reflection sheet with you to the service. You can also pick up a hard copy in the Greeting Area, or download a copy at <https://www.harcourtuc.ca/services-celebrations/advent-2019/>. We hope that this Advent event might help us all deepen our awareness of the climate crisis and find ways in which we might each contribute to mitigating its inevitable challenges.

Below is a brief Preface on this series of meditations from Jim:

*"The season of dwindling, then returning, light has come. The days of early snow, visible breath, and frost-covered panes have arrived. They invite a slower pace, a hunkering down and a cocooning. They encourage a closer walk with the people and stories we hold most dear. Before the mystery, we settle in and embrace hope. We engage in practices that loosen the grip of all that holds us back or brings us down. We prepare.*

*We light candles in the dark. We decorate what is ever-green. We sing of new beginnings. We exchange gifts. We recall that the way through shadow and uncertainty involves togetherness and glad sharing. Not knowing when the next growing season will come, we feast. We break bread with family, friends and strangers. We grow pensive, we lean into gratitude and we endeavour to resist the instinct to withdraw. In the heart of advent darkness, we turn to one another in love, saying, "Lift up your hearts!"*

*One of the practices of this season involves taking time for personal study and reflection. There are recommended bible readings for the Sundays of Advent. The texts offer thoughts for us to consider, and connections for us to make, concerning the workings of grace within and around us. Traditionally, these Sundays focus on the themes of hope, peace, joy and love. This year, we are invited to weave the perspectives and concerns of deep ecology into our reflections and practices. We thank the members of our Spiritual Life Committee who have prepared this little study guide for our use. Each week offers a piece of text, a comment and a question for our consideration. May our engagement enrich our experience of the season and strengthen God's world. Advent blessings!*

## **Make a Financial Commitment - For the Future**

by Murray Woods, Board of Trustees

My name is Murray Woods and since I have been the Treasurer of the Board of Trustees going on seven years, it should not be surprising that I will be talking about money. However, I am going to be talking about my money and supporting Harcourt. People who know me well, know that I am careful with money. For much of my life it was not an option, and I'm sure many here can identify with that reality, and also once the habit is set, it is one of the factors that made ours a generation that saves.

About 12 years ago the Government announced that gifts of publicly traded stocks, when given to a charity like our church, could be given without triggering Capital Gains tax. That immediately got my attention and for the years since, that is exactly what I have done.

At the present time, I have been giving Harcourt the US shares of Home Depot, which have hovered around \$200.00 a share for the last 2 or 3 years. It is a little higher than that now. My cost was \$40.00 per share. So, for every share I give to the church, my out of pocket cost is \$40.00 and the church gets \$200.00 plus US exchange, and the charitable receipt from the church, in this case, will save me \$40.00 in other taxes so I have my \$40.00 back. The church gets it's \$200.00, plus I pay no capital gains taxes and I get my \$40.00 back in other tax savings. It works for me, something to think about.

Looking ahead in dealing with my Will, and remembering Harcourt UC, it should not be surprising that I would apply a similar logic. The first part of that decision was pretty simple-- would I

prefer the money to go to the Government in taxes or to Harcourt tax free? With that decided, in my Will, my estate executors have been directed to choose the shares with the greatest capital gains to be given to Harcourt. These shares will be sold by the UC Foundation and the money transferred to Harcourt for the Trustee Pillars, and for the future use of the church. No capital gains taxes will be payable and the large Gift Receipt will offset other estate taxes. The gift will come in the name of Emily Woods and Murray Woods. As some of you will know, Emily spent many years as a UC staff member-- first at the Aurora UC and then at First St. Andrews UC in London as Director of Christian Education. Emily was very highly respected and at her Celebration of Life here, held 11 years ago now, some 700 people converge upon this building. I remember Mark Sears and Dick Julian wheeling chairs in to fill the centre isle and the outside walls and Narthex were standing room only. It was quite a tribute.

So why am I making this commitment to Harcourt. You might suggest that it is because of Emily. Possibly, but it was not part of her Will. Maybe taxes, since I've been stressing them. No, the reason is deeper than that-- it is because of my failure. I have failed my parents and the UC. It is of little consolation that I am not alone because I am part of a generation who has failed their parents and the UC. My parents' church 40 or 50 years ago was strong. When it was time for them to pass on the reins of responsibility, we were ready. My parents didn't leave money to the church. They didn't have to-- the church was healthy. Their view of the church saw their kids, my siblings and me, active and involved in the church and their Grand children, my kids, attending church school and youth groups. Now roll ahead 30 or 40 years into the 2000's and the time has come for us to pass on the reins again, but my kids are no longer there. They may be fine productive citizens, but they are not an active part of any church and my grand children are even farther removed. This all has happened on my watch. I am the broken link in the very long church relationship of our family, but unfortunately it has also happened in thousands of other UC families. One Sunday, last September, it was stated, that the UC church of Canada, over the last 50 years, had experienced tremendous change, from declining membership, and on our watch.

The church today is not healthy, and it needs help. I believe it needs help to bridge this period; help to find itself; to evolve and become more relevant to the needs of today's society. I accept that the church is making progress in this direction, but it will take time and money. Fortunately, our generation has accumulated more wealth than any before. Just take real-estate. Think what you paid for the first house you ever owned. I paid \$8,250.00 and what is, or was, the value of your last house? We do have money.

I failed once; I do not want to be guilty of failing twice. That is why Harcourt UC is named in my Will-- to help the church buy time and bridge through this period of falling membership, and to survive, ready, for the return of strength and stability.

It is something for us all to think about. Amen

Tired of the hyper-consumerism of the Christmas Season?

Want a chance to meditate on a deeper meaning of Christmas?

The Spiritual Life Committee will again this year be offering a Christmas Day service.

In keeping with our focus on eco-spirituality for this year, we will spend time reflecting on the Holy Family as refugees and migrants.

Lo and behold! Christmas is about celebrating that God appeared among the marginalized, the refugees, the migrants...

Christmas Day, 10AM in the Chapel.

**harcourt**  
seek | connect | act



Image by DarkWorkX from Pixabay

## **Darko, We Had no Idea About All the Things You Did for Harcourt!**

by Dave Hume, Chair, Property Committee

The Property Committee has been scrambling over the last two weeks (this was written November 21st) to try to cover the many things that Darko looked after at Harcourt. I was very surprised at how much I didn't know about keeping the church running and how complex the maintenance really is. The Property Committee entered into a short-term Janitorial Services contract with D&D Janitorial Services who have been doing a good job of keeping washrooms and hallways clean and rugs vacuumed. We are going to need some professional help to understand all the complexities of the boiler system and heating. We also have advertised for some help in clearing sidewalks on snowy mornings before the Royal City Pre-School children and their parents arrive, and on the occasions when there are big events such as the KW Symphony Concerts. Mark Sears, Larry Smith, Frank Webster and I (and probably others) have been on rotating shifts to make sure the church is locked at night and to check that everything is OK. What we would really like is to find an experienced custodian in Darko's absence. If anyone has good leads, I would love to hear from you. Thanks to everybody on the Property Committee, Mark Sears, Alison MacNeill and Wendy Guilmette for their generous help.

## **HO! HO! HO! Why Not Sit Down with a Book From the Harcourt Library This Christmas Season?**

by Mary-Lou Funston

This month there are several new books in the library. Many thanks to those who donate books they think will enhance our shelves.



### **WORKING WITH THE YOUTH IN THE CHURCH**

#### **\* Growing Young**

6 Essential Strategies to Help Young People Discover and Love Your Church

Powell, Mulder, & Griffin 259 POW

- The subtitle says it all!

#### **\* Stickyfaith - Youth worker edition**

Powell, Griffin, & Crawford 259 POW

- Practical ideas to nurture long-term faith in teenagers.



## ANALYZING THE ECONOMY

### \* **The Market as God**

Harvey Cox 174 COX

- Cox writes about how the market has become deified, then goes on to explain that only by understanding how that has happened can its servanthood to society be restored.



BEING A CHRISTIAN IN OUR MODERN SOCIETY In each of the following books the subtitle says it all about the content.

### \* **Days of Awe and Wonder**

Marcus Borg 230 BOR

- How to Be a Christian in the 21st Century

### \* **The Great Spiritual Migration**

Brian McLaren 270 McL

- How the World's Largest Religion is Seeking A Better Way to be Christian

### \* **Turning to One Another**

Margaret Wheatley 177.2 WHE

- Simple conversations to restore hope to the future

ALL OF THE ABOVE WILL BE ON THE TOP SHELVES ON THE INNER WALL OF THE LIBRARY. I hope that you will come in and have a look at them. I would also like to remind you that **Advent is coming up** very quickly. We have a number of books that will help you prepare for Advent and Christmas. The adult books are on a shelf on the window wall of the library. The children's books are on the end shelf of the Primary stand and on the shelf facing the window on the Junior stand.

## **Caroline Harcourt Friendship Circle Enjoys a Nibble or Two**

by Jean Hume

The Caroline Harcourt Friendship Circle invites all women of the church and their friends to its special Christmas gathering on **December 9th at 11:45am**. Join us for Christmas punch and nibbles but also bring your bag lunch. Delicious festive baked treats will be served with tea following our program of stories, devotional and carols. The program will evolve around your memories of your favourite aprons. Please bring one if you still have it.

If you are baking special goodies, we would enjoy having you share a few with us. No guilt trips are allowed after tasting sugar plums!

## **John Buttars to Speak to Harcourt Men's Group About the Haida Peoples**

by Bill Lord

The next Harcourt Men's Group meeting will be **Wednesday, December 11<sup>th</sup>**. Our speaker this month will be John Buttars, who was minister of Harcourt Church until his retirement in 2006. He has served on the board of Chalmers for 11 years, now off, but continues as chair of the CCSC Microfinance Committee. He is still seeing people for spiritual direction and providing leadership in small groups. Come and hear the story of John's and Barbara's trip to British Columbia to explore a part of Canada--the unceded land of the Haida peoples.

John has been moved by the actions of The United Church in issuing its first apology to indigenous peoples in the 1980's. Since then we have had the reports of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. His talk will explore the experiences of the trip and the challenge of our attitudes to aboriginal land claims and treaties.

All men and women, as was the case with our November meeting, are welcome and encouraged to attend. David Mowat will have coffee and tea ready at 7:45 a.m., the meeting will begin at 8:00 a.m. Murray Woods will be the leader.

In your date book please record the date of January 8, 2020 for our next meeting. The speaker for January will be announced at our meeting.

---

---

## **COMMUNITY NEWS**

### **YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE: Harcourt Emergency Response – Communication Test**

by Harcourt Emergency Response Team

Last winter Harcourt experienced three weather emergencies which required the Church to be closed. In readiness for this winter we will be testing our communication system for contacting the congregation in an emergency, on the afternoon of **December 4**.

If you get this Emergency Test communication, you do not need to respond. If you do not get this Emergency Test communication and wish to be notified, please let the Office know at 519.824.4177 x0 or office@harcourtuc.ca.

**We want to be sure that all Harcourt people can be contacted in an Emergency.**

## **Deep Gratitude for Harcourt Support**

by Fuad Ali

I would like to thank all of the council members, all people in Harcourt, and you, for your kindness and generosity that has helped us out through this difficult time which me and my family are going through. For that I want to show my deep gratitude and appreciation to all of you. And we keep you all in our prayers. Since I came to Harcourt I have a feeling that I have support and a Harcourt family is with me, which I think is due to all the people from Harcourt. God's blessing upon you all. You and Harcourt are doing exactly what Mr. Jim says in his blessing at the end of the service: "Life is short and we do not know how long our journey will be...". I am very affected by that blessing.

If such a problem happened to us in our home region, they would never treat me like that. Thank you all. Your support and help from Harcourt is highly appreciated by me and Kashan.

## **Chalmers Seeks Board Members – A Great Way to Serve the Community**

by Jim Ball

Chalmers has a unique place in the hearts of Harcourt members. And Chalmers annually thanks the Harcourt congregation for its Generous and continuing financial and volunteer support.

While we invite our own members to consider serving on Harcourt committees, we also encourage our members to strengthen Guelph through service in community organizations like Chalmers. The organization would like Harcourt to know the following:

"Chalmers Community Services Center is seeking community members to join the board and various committees of Chalmers. We would be appreciative of any skills and experience you have to share. If interested please follow the link provided to see a full description of the board and committees currently operating at Chalmers."

<http://chalmerscentre.ca/about.../board-of-directors-staff/>

## Trinity United and the Healing Power of Touch

by the Trinity United Church TT planning team for Therapeutic Touch™: Science and Spirit Submitted by Loraine Holding, Chair of Council

On September 30, 2019 Trinity United Church Therapeutic Touch Branch offered the opportunity to all TT practitioners in our area to share a morning together and hear guest speaker Dr. Nauman Naeem MD. Dr Naeem specializes in Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine at Guelph General Hospital and is the author of the book *Healing from the Inside Out: Overcome Chronic Disease and Radically Change Your Life*. As acknowledged on his website, his intellectual journey has taken him far beyond the confines of conventional medicine.

Our morning started with a buzz of energy and excitement, a wonderful spread of refreshments, and a warm welcome to everyone. Our ministers, Rev John Benham and Rev Gaylyn McLean, spoke about their involvement and their support of TT at Trinity United. Each of the five area TT Branches (Elm Tree, Lilac, Magnolia, Willow, and Trinity) spoke for a short time about how their group operates, sharing what happens in their group meetings and what is unique and special about their group. Along with members of the five local Branches, many other practitioners that do not have a specific group affiliation were present as well. We had an amazing 100 registrants sign up for this event!



We gathered for table discussions and shared experiences, concerns, and ideas over coffee and refreshments. Table groups explored questions like: What is the most interesting thing that you have learned recently about TT? Is there an experience that you have had with TT (either giving or receiving) that touched you deeply? Have you ever been surprised by the feedback that you have received from someone for whom you offered a TT treatment? Would you share that experience? Do you ever have difficulty explaining TT to someone who has never experienced it before? How do you help them to understand? In what ways has TT had an impact on your life? What aspects of TT would you like to know more about?

Then Dr. Naeem was introduced. He spoke for about 45 minutes, sharing some of his experiences and wisdom gained from dealing with patients at end of life and in critical care situations. After being thanked, Dr. Naeem stayed for a while to answer questions and offer participants the opportunity to purchase his book (a sell out!).

Even though Dr. Naeem is very aware of energy and healing, he had never experienced a Therapeutic Touch treatment personally, and appreciated being given that experience. Throughout the morning, knitted prayer shawls and lap blankets were made available to the participants, who could choose one in exchange for a contribution to the "Dee and Dora Fund" – an endowment fund in honour of Dolores Krieger and Dora van Gelder Kunz, the founders of Therapeutic Touch. The fund is to be used to bring excellent speakers to TT congresses and events. We were happy to add to that growing fund!

The Trinity TT Branch is an outreach ministry of Trinity United Church, Guelph, and we are grateful and thankful for Embracing the Spirit's financial support [10] of this opportunity to continue growing, sharing, and learning more about TT and its beneficial effects – both for TT practitioners and those we treat, within our congregation and in the wider community.

The morning was deemed a huge success, and participants left feeling energized. We are hopeful for more chances to share with other TTERS in the future.

## **All Things Christmas 2019 – Done and Dusted!**

by Janet Webster

As *The All Things Christmas* fundraiser takes place a few days after the Herald deadline, a final report is not possible. However, at this point, most aspects are falling into place and we are anticipating another successful event.

There are MANY promises of baking and muffins for the cafe. We have received donations of lovely costume jewellery and treasures. Elves have prepared pine cones on sticks, wooden "lollipops", cut attractive natural material, filled pots with soil, and gathered greenery. We look forward to two wonderful, busy days of creativity later this week as energetic volunteers transform the gym and friendship room into a fragrant, beautiful centre for "All Things Christmas". A rewarding experience this year, has been the increased number of people who have stepped up to take on tasks such as the sales in the Friendship room, creating signs, spraying teasels, cutting hydrangeas and so on.

A few years ago, Lynn Hancock was a new member of Harcourt and described this transformation as "A Miracle". So, to borrow another phrase, here is to co-operative weather and a "Miracle on Dean Avenue".

UPDATE: **All Things Christmas** last Saturday was a great success! Several types of greens were sold out by 10am. By Saturday afternoon, we knew we would be adding \$8,225.08 to the Harcourt coffers. More details will be included in the January Herald. Thanks to all of our hard workers who made this success happen! A special thanks to those who came to clean up for the group meeting that evening.



## The Church Garden Corner – December

by Mark Sears

Winter was in the air on a November Sunday when a light snow blanketed the Celebration Garden in the morning. By 10:30 am Standard Time, the sun broke out and I was impressed with the bright colours shining through our garden windows. Now that we have had our first major winter snowfall, the last bright colour in the garden is a maple tree. After reading Sarah's piece about the burning bush in last month's Garden Corner, some



of you may have also noticed the bright magenta leaves of the Japanese bloodleaf maple, *Acer palmatum atropurpureum*, tucked into the sunny corner of the church outside the preschool windows. Those leaves turn purple after the initial foliage unfurls in the spring and remain that way all summer and fall. It is only in the late fall that they turn a unique vivid magenta colour, especially when the sunlight falls

on them. This colour reminds me of royal scarlet, a deep magenta pigment that the Spanish rulers reserved for themselves beginning in the 1500's because of its expensive and unusual source. The dye used for this colour was extracted from a scale insect (the Cochineal scale, *Dactylopius* spp.) an insect parasite found only on the prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia* spp.), at that time a cactus with many species native and endemic to the New World. The insects' bodies were dried and then crushed to produce the dye that was cherished by royalty and its value was second only to the silver the Spanish extracted from Mexico, Central and South America. It is still used today to fashion the beautiful weavings made by native peoples from Chile and Peru to Mexico.

If you inspect the trunk of this tree closely, you will notice that it has had a difficult life as a sapling. That is because it was planted on the other side of the church in front of the stone wall by the front doors. My bad! I thought it would look very nice in front of the grey stone of the Bruce Granite wall. However, I forgot one of the tenets of good gardening – consider the environment when planting a tree like this Japanese Maple that is sensitive to cold and wind. Each spring the tree struggled to produce new shoots from last years' buds. Many shoots would shrivel with the cold winds of spring before they hardened off. After a few

years of such a difficult life, I decided the tree needed to be moved to the new Celebration Garden area that was being installed. I picked the most quiet and sunny location and located the tree there. It has flourished ever since despite my negligence in selecting the proper location in the first place. Enjoy this survivor as it unfurls its leaves and receives its royal cloak in late fall.

This tree was one of those that we unofficially planted in memory of one of our Harcourt members who was respected by many. Her name was Mary Haig, who spent much of her adult life as a missionary in the Far East, principally in Japan before and after World War II. Mary Haig was born in Coburg in 1892. She was a student at Toronto Normal School and she taught in a rural one-room school from 1912 to 1918. Called to the Ministry, she trained from 1918 to 1920, first with the Presbyterian Church and then with the United Church of Canada after 1925. She was posted to Taiwan from 1920 to 1926, Japan from 1927 to 1941, Newfoundland from 1941 to 1946 and Japan from 1947 to 1958. Mary retired in 1959 and moved to Guelph in 1971. It was brought to my attention by Peter Gill, one of our stalwart choir members, that many of the volumes of *Voices United* songbooks that we use are dedicated to the memory of Mary Haig. So, when you have time to gaze at the beauty of the Japanese Maple in our garden, consider the beauty of this woman's life as a missionary and member of our faith community.





Dear Supporters,

The Christmas season will soon be upon us and the **Christmas Gift Bag Campaign** is getting underway.

We hope you will consider supporting this valuable program. Each year we hear from CCSC guests how grateful they are to receive this gift and that, for many, it is the **ONLY** gift they receive. For this reason we ask that you include new, good quality items in their original packages. Please note that there is no need for the items to be gift wrapped. Christmas Gift Bags can be delivered in new, reusable shopping bags.

One pair of warm gloves

One pair of thick socks

Regular size shampoo (not conditioner)

Toothbrush

Toothpaste and/or dental floss

Shaving cream for men/box of pads for women

Shower gel, body wash, or soap

Antiperspirant/deodorant

Package of 5-10 disposable razors

Boxed candy or boxed chocolate (not homemade)

Small jar of instant coffee, box of tea bags, or tin/box of hot chocolate (no coffee pods)

Please contact me if you wish to participate in this year's Christmas Gift Bag Campaign and let me know how many Christmas bags you wish to provide. This year's final delivery date to Chalmers Downtown is **Friday December 6th**.

Deliveries can be made to Chalmers Downtown (41 Macdonell Street) on Tuesdays between 9 am and 3 pm, Wednesdays between 5 and 8 pm and Fridays between 8 am and 3 pm. If the door is locked, give a hearty knock.

Deliveries can also be made to our Chalmers West location (the portable behind Three Willows Church – 577 Willow Road) on Monday December 9<sup>th</sup> from 5-7 pm and Tuesday December 10<sup>th</sup> between 9 am and 12 pm. Please note that there is plenty of parking at our Chalmers West location.

Please feel free to call me with any questions. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Sarah Dermer, Program and Volunteer Coordinator [volunteer@chalmerscentre.ca](mailto:volunteer@chalmerscentre.ca)

519-822-8778

# Harcourt Memorial United Church

## Call for submissions for the Annual Report 2019

**To: Harcourt Team Leaders, Committee Chairs and Coordinators of Groups at Harcourt including those who received sponsored space.**

The end of the year is rapidly approaching and with it comes the task of assembling Harcourt's Annual Report. Please submit a brief report including some of the highlights of 2019.

**Team Leaders, Committee Chairs** Please include all the names of your team or committee members in 2019. For retired and new members, be sure to include the date they left or joined you.

**Coordinators of Groups** The information in these reports also assists in compiling the statistics for the United Church of Canada. Be sure to include the numbers of the participants, and in the case of children and youth, the ages as well. Be sure to include leaders, facilitators and organizers in your 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](mailto:office@harcourtuc.ca) with the document attached.

**The deadline is January 13, 2020 but beat the rush and submit it early.**

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 Wendy for assistance.

Thanks! Wendy Guilmette, Church Administrator

## **Make a Difference: Get involved in a Church-Sponsored Climate Change Program**

by Peter Jackson

Dublin Street United is leading a program tentatively named “**Bridging Individual Climate Change Actions in Church Communities**”. Dublin has invited Harcourt and other GUM churches to name a representative or representatives to sit in on the planning meetings.

The core of the program is to invite people to pledge taking action. The pledges are focused on reducing carbon footprint in areas such as transportation, air travel, diet and home heating. Support groups will be convened of people pledging in a certain area.

The planning meetings take place for one hour every two or three weeks. Often the meetings take place over telephone or Internet, and sometimes are face-to-face. The responsibility of a Harcourt representative or representatives would be to listen to those meetings and report progress back to Harcourt’s ad-hoc working group on eco-spirituality to help explore whether and how Harcourt might engage in the program.

If you are interested, please contact Peter Jackson through the church office.

***May all I say and all I think  
be in harmony with thee,  
God within me,  
God beyond me,  
maker of the trees.***  
**(Chinook prayer, Pacific Northwest Coast,  
North America)**

## Green Gift Ideas to Help Save the Planet

by Jean and Peter Jackson on behalf of Harcourt's ad hoc working group on eco-spirituality

Christmas is upon us and we want to give gifts. How to do so in an ecologically responsible manner?

Almost everything we do produces some carbon dioxide, beginning with breathing in and out. Completely carbon-neutral gifts are likely to be few and far between, but that does not mean we have to stop trying and rush to the mall. Self-styled 'Mountain Equipment Co-op sustainability buff and savvy egghead' Wade Janzen offers this comment:

*"In my experience, there are three key approaches that are a sure bet: a) focusing on green living; b) giving experiences (not things); or c) going all-in on one big sustainably minded gift. With each of these, you'll need to keep sustainable sourcing and durability top of mind. The final step to nailing a green gift? Avoid needless gift wrap."*  
*(<https://www.mec.ca/en/article/gift-ideas-for-your-eco-friendly-friend>)*

Here are some thoughts for each of the three key approaches.

### Focusing on Green Living

- think of gifts made of natural products - wood, beeswax, bamboo;
- consider reusable water bottles and travel mugs, canvas shopping bags;
- buy things produced locally, encouraging local artisans and minimizing shipping impacts;
- give used or secondhand gifts.

### Giving Experiences (Not Things)

- give an adult a gift of gardening, snow shoveling, cleaning, an outing to the theatre, a cooked meal (once a month, perhaps), or a visit to chat, sing or play music;
- teach a skill such as vegetarian cooking, music or singing;
- take out a gift subscription to an online magazine or newspaper;
- for children, give a small, tangible gift for immediate gratification combined with the promise of an experience; for example, a skipping rope plus the promise of a weekly outing to the playground, or art supplies plus the promise of drawing lessons, or a small book plus the promise of a specially made-up oral story.

## One Big Sustainably-Minded Gift

- help someone with a major environmental purchase such as home insulation, solar panels or an electric vehicle;
- give a bicycle;
- for new parents, pay for a year's cloth diaper service;
- make a donation to an environmentally-friendly charity such as the Old Growth Forest Project (<https://ignatiusguelph.ca/old-growth-forest/>).

But what about gift wrap? In our house, we don't buy wrapping paper any more. We wrap gifts in the colourful flyers that come with the Tribune, or in cotton tea-towels which becomes supplementary gifts, or in reusable bags.

We hope you will enjoy a green Christmas!

## How Harcourt Cares

*The purpose of this series is to explore some of the ways that members of Harcourt care for other members of our Church and beyond. This month Kathy Magee provides some information on the topic. If you have a suggestion of people or groups at Harcourt who serve the greater*

*community through caring please e-mail the suggestion to [theherald@harcourtuc.ca](mailto:theherald@harcourtuc.ca)*



Kathy Magee is a member of the Harcourt Spiritual Life Committee, a group that is tasked with providing resources to Church members to assist them in meeting their spiritual needs. Some of the members of this Committee serve the Harcourt community as Covenant Spiritual Companions. The definition of a Covenant Spiritual Companion is a trained person that accompanies individuals who are on a spiritual "journey", helping them to deepen and enrich their relationship with God. In a one-on-one meeting that takes place once per month, the spiritual companion listens with "one ear to the person and one ear to God" to see where the spirit is moving an individual as she/he struggles. Kathy says that Harcourt's Spiritual Companions are an eclectic group with different skills and approaches. However, the strength of the group, she says, is in the skills that each companion brings in placing a focus on spirituality and spiritual needs.

Outside of Harcourt, in the greater community, some people can make their living as a spiritual companion. However, at Harcourt, there is no charge for this support. Nevertheless, at times, an honorarium may be given to a companion by someone she/he is working with and this donation goes back to Harcourt to support other activities in the Church. The Spiritual Companions offer a flexible, unstructured practice, providing direction, listening or support - whatever people need in their spiritual quest. Often those who seek this care and support are at a turning point, or a crossroads, in their lives. For younger people this turning point may be at a time of change as they try to juggle the demands of working full time with those of parenthood. A person may ask: *How do I manage this and maintain my spiritual connection?* For older people, the crossroad may be at a time of retirement as they experience this change and search anew to see what God is calling them to do. Sometimes the change is marked by the end of a relationship, such as through death or grief. In each case, such a crossroad provides an opportunity for spiritual reflection and a search for how to do things differently.

The one-to-one journey with a Spiritual Companion can last 40 weeks, or it can even continue for a couple of years. Spiritual Companions at Harcourt are members of a professional organization called *Spiritual Directors International*. The Harcourt group meets once per month in someone's home and members include other trained companions from outside of the Church. The first half hour of their meeting consists of meditation and reflection. Then, if there are questions or resources needed by a Spiritual Companion, she/he brings this to the group for discussion. Kathy says that being a Spiritual Companion is very rewarding and Harcourt is looking for others who might like to be trained to serve in this way.

Members of the Harcourt Spiritual Life Committee also care for others in several other ways, including helping to organize the Ignatian Exercises that take place in Guelph every 2 years. Although it is primarily associated with Harcourt Church, these exercises engage an ecumenical group of people. The Ignatian Exercises comprise a 40-week program of *Lectio Divina* where directors meet with participants once a week, again on a one-to-one basis. *Lectio Divina* is a Latin word that means "divine reading," "spiritual reading," or "holy reading". It represents a method of prayer and scriptural reading that is intended to promote communion with God and to provide spiritual insight. As part of the Ignatian Exercises there are also meditations, body prayer and scripture readings with a focus on deepening a relationship with and understanding of Jesus. A *body prayer* is any prayer that incorporates movement, and it can be as simple as walking with the intention that your every step be a prayer.

The Spiritual Life Committee has also developed a sacred listening circle template that can be used by any group. For example, the Harcourt Church Council might need an answer to a question and they may choose to use the listening circle template as a way to discuss the

issues in a sharing and respectful way. Other groups in the Church have used the Sacred Listening Circle template in this way to reflect and communicate on a topic. Kathy believes that being heard and having people listen to you is very important and meaningful to people as they seek answers. In addition, the Sacred Listening Circle often centres around issues that may not be raised in other discussion formats or it can also provide connections that offer a unique understanding and opportunity for different perspectives to arise. The aim of the Listening Circle is to maintain a focus on the spiritual aspect of discussion while still grounding the thought process in reality. This assists people to be open to the spirit whatever is happening to them.

Other caring supports that are provided by the Spiritual Life Committee include a season of creation meditation guide, an advent meditation guide and a meditation guide for Lent. The Committee also leads a Holy Saturday meditation at Easter and a Christmas day service and they also organize and run the Harcourt congregational retreat. They also lead a Saturday morning group called *Progressive Christianity* where anyone can come to watch a video and to discuss it with others using the spiritual listening circle.

One of the many ways that Kathy herself serves the community's spiritual needs as a Committee member is through a prayer series at Wellington Park Retirement Residence in Guelph. This program is for elderly residents and is offered twice a year, running for 6 weeks at a time. About twelve to fourteen people on average attend the series and worship together every Friday throughout the program. She also speaks to groups such as the Caroline Harcourt Women's Fellowship on topics of a spiritual nature, and will shortly be speaking to the group about peace, meditation, and sharing - a chance to be heard. Spiritual Companions, Listening Circles, helping others to be open to the spirit, this is a way that Harcourt cares.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Passing:



**Auld, Marianne.** Passed away peacefully at Hospice Wellington on Saturday, November 2, 2019 at the age of 93. Beloved wife of the late James "Gordon" Auld (2008). Loving mother and grandmother. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Hospice Wellington.



**Willoughby,** Peggy Irene (née Ramsey). Surrounded by family, Peggy passed peacefully on November 8, 2019. Predeceased by husband Russell Allan. Much loved mother and grandmother. Raised in Carlyle SK, Peggy kept the family pharmacy tradition alive by graduating from the University of Saskatchewan with a Bachelor of Pharmacy in 1953. She worked as a pharmacist at St. Joseph's and Guelph General hospitals from 1968 to 1990. She volunteered at Hospice, Probus, Health Care Professionals and University / College Women. Peggy loved to travel, curl, golf, bike and swim. She enjoyed quiet conversations and lively happy hours and appreciated every meal to the last bite. A celebration of Peggy's life will be held at Harcourt at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, December 20, 2019. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to support Hospice Wellington.

**Brett,** Sarah. Passed away on November 13, 2019.



**Fear,** Norma passed away November 26, 2019. Please hold her family and friends in heart and prayer as they grieve her loss. Information about a memorial service to celebrate her life will be circulated when plans are finalized. (Please see *Behind the Scenes* section below for a brief account of her extensive service to the community).

## Other Announcements:

- \* **DECEMBER 7, 9AM:** CHRISTMAS MARKET Three Willows United Church, 577 Willows Rd, Guelph, is hosting a Christmas Market from 9am to 1pm on Saturday, December 7. There will be crafts, a Christmas cookie walk, gifts and more.
- \* Harcourt Church will be closed Monday **December 30 to Tuesday December 31.**

- \* **Dec 21: Saturday Night Supper** Harcourt will have the opportunity to prepare and serve our next Saturday Night Supper on December 21. See our [website](#) for more information or [sign-up](#) to help.

# Get ready for Christ(mas)!

Advent Calendar 2019

For people seeking a moment of rest... Spend time getting ready for Christ(mas) by reflecting on a different question each day.

You may want to set a timer from anywhere between 1 to 10 minutes to help structure your waiting and preparing time.

<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Light the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent candle, giving thanks for Jesus our Hope</p>  <p>[1st Sunday in Advent]</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Who do you say Jesus is? Brainstorm different names for Jesus.</p> <p>[International day for the Abolition of Slavery]</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Who might your home or church be inaccessible to? What could you do to make your space more welcoming?</p> <p>[Disability Awareness Day]</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>How do you prepare for a special guest? How does being prepared show care?</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>What are your favourite words of wisdom?</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>What can you do to help stop violence?</p> <p>[National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women]</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>What is the difference between wisdom and knowledge? How do you gain wisdom?</p>
<p><b>8</b></p> <p>Light the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent candle, giving thanks for Jesus, Prince of Peace</p>  <p>[2nd Sunday in Advent]</p>	<p><b>9</b></p> <p>Who does your community say Jesus is? How would your family and friends describe Jesus?</p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p>What are human rights? How can you help to protect the rights of others?</p> <p>[Human Rights Day]</p>	<p><b>11</b></p> <p>Who has helped you to grow? How?</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>Who do you trust to lead you? Why?</p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>What can you do to show your support to a loved one?</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p>What does the media (TV, music, etc.) say about Jesus? Do you agree or disagree with what they teach?</p>
<p><b>15</b></p> <p>Light the 3<sup>rd</sup> Advent candle, giving thanks for Jesus, Joy of the World</p>  <p>[3rd Sunday in Advent]</p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p>What are signs of new life and growth in your life?</p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>Who has helped you to unlock a mystery or puzzle? How?</p>	<p><b>18</b></p> <p>How would you prepare if Jesus and the Holy Family were guests in your home?</p> <p>[World Migrant Day]</p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p>What are your favorite images and symbols for Jesus?</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>Does Jesus bring hope into your life? How?</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>What gifts are always with us?</p>
<p><b>22</b></p> <p>Light the 4<sup>th</sup> Advent candle, giving thanks for Jesus, Love made known</p>  <p>[4th Sunday in Advent]</p>	<p><b>23</b></p> <p>What does the Bible say about Jesus? What is your favourite description of Jesus?</p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p>When do you feel closest to Jesus?</p>	<p><b>25</b></p> <p>What gifts do you bring to Jesus today?</p>	<p>For more ideas visit <a href="http://united-church.ca">united-church.ca</a> search "advent unwrapped"</p>  <p><b>Adventunwrapped</b></p> <p>180121</p>		



The United Church  
of Canada

## Minute for Mission

### A Place of Wellness for Mother and Child

Our gifts for Mission & Service enable community ministries like Massey Centre to create new programs that meet the needs of young, single mothers. Massey Centre in Toronto, Ontario, has been a place of refuge and encouragement for almost 120 years. The centre has grown over that time. It was originally housed in the Methodist parsonage and known as The Victor Home for Women. In 1947, the Massey family gave the centre their summer home; the centre was renamed the Massey Centre Home for Unwed Mothers, and it is now known as Massey Centre for Women. While the original home is still part of the footprint, the centre has expanded to include pre-and post- natal housing, education programs, a daycare, and infant mental health programs.

“Everyone has a connection to Massey Centre!” exclaims Chief Executive Officer Ekua Asabea Blair. Massey Centre is a place that people speak fondly of, and many choose to stay connected to. Lisa, who works as the centre’s receptionist, is a welcoming face and voice for first encounters at the centre. When Lisa was 18, she found out she was pregnant. She had no family support when she came to Massey Centre. “If I hadn’t been here, my child would have been taken away from me by Children’s Aid,” Lisa says. “Because of Massey Centre, I have been able to watch my daughter grow up into the beautiful young woman she is today. Without Massey Centre, I would be lost.”

Massey Centre is very thankful for United Church support, whether in the form of Mission & Service giving, local United Churches’ gifts of diapers, or United Church Women who knit beautiful blankets. All these gifts are changing lives each and every way. If Mission & Service giving is already a regular part of your life, thank you so much! If you have not given, please join me in making Mission & Service giving a regular part of your life of faith. Loving our neighbour is at the heart of our Mission & Service.

# Behind the Scenes

## A Tribute to Ben and Norma Fear

by David Mowat, Larry Smith and Marguerite Davies

*"Today, it provides a feeling of satisfaction that I can still help somebody, someplace"*  
(Ben Fear, July, 2019)

Ben Fear is a native of Niagara Falls. After WW2 service in the medical corps and university, he returned to Niagara Falls as a retail pharmacist. Ben married his high school sweetheart Norma, a teacher. In 1997 they moved to Guelph to the Village by the Arboretum. We celebrate the life and passing of Norma (see Announcements below).



Ben and Norma have achieved exceptional dedication and sustained commitment for the benefit of others in their community and also abroad. Rather unique is the fact that they frequently volunteered as a team, particularly in retirement. Even if one of them occasionally had a few separate projects, the other provided assistance and support. The variety, extent and duration of their volunteering is remarkable.

**YMCA International Service Club,**

### Niagara Falls

*Ben; many years during working career. Projects such as selling Christmas trees, indoor learn-to-swim programs.*

### Lundy's Lane United Church, Niagara Falls

*1949 to 1997. Assisted families new to Canada get established, shopping, finance; delivered meals occasionally to those in need; on many committees over many years.*

### Other Volunteering in Niagara Falls

*Book Riot, annual used-book sale for Niagara Women in Crisis.*

*Norma- coordinated annual Claxton fruit cake sales at Christmas.*

- Telefriend, answering phone calls from stressed people.*
- Niagara Falls Social Planning Council, started youth hostel.*
- drove cancer patients to Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto.*

### **Canadian Foundation For World Development**

*Volunteered in Guyana for 3 months in mid-1990s. Sorted out medicines in disarray in warehouse.*

### **UNICEF**

*Norma sold cards every fall in Niagara Falls and 1998 to recently in Guelph. She assisted providing food and drink at two concerts per year of Guelph Male Choir as a fundraiser. Ben assisted generating funds in Guelph from loose coins. Members of a UN Club in Niagara Falls and hosted international visitors.*

### **River Run Performing Arts Centre, Guelph**

*December 1997 to May 2018. Ben; 193 shifts as usher or coat check. Norma; 226 shifts as usher and host.*

### **Arboretum, University of Guelph**

*73,000 visitors per year to 8.3 km of trails, gardens and Centre.*

*Ben and Norma contributed time, labor and finances, 1998 to present. Each, one morning/week plus support at plant sales. Worked in gardens (Japanese, English, Gosling) combating weeds; Perpetual Care Memorial Trees, mulching, pruning, edging; stuffing envelopes.*

### **Harcourt Memorial United Church, Guelph**

*1997 to present. Faithful, involved, stellar members. Ushering, selling grocery cards, gardening, fellowship, Property Committee (Ben, 2011 to present), Justice and Outreach Committee (Ben and Norma, early 2000 to 2016)- Chalmers Community Services Centre and Saturday Night Suppers; faithful and long-time donors of time, food and finances as well as encouragement of this ministry. Garage Sale in April and Christmas Bazaar in November (2013 to present), Norma in jewellery and Ben a floater.*

### **Uganda Project (Changing Lives)**

*Major time and financial commitment for Ben and Norma. Traveled to Uganda for month of February, beginning in 1999 for 15 consecutive years, ending on Ben's 90th birthday. The NorBen Student Scholarship Program supported more than 50 young people. While Fears were the main sponsors, they fundraised at Harcourt for donations of clothing, school supplies,*

*pennies and sponsorships of individual students. They initially organized and helped build a school and then set up a committee to dispense these funds for school fees and hostel expenses for eligible students. Students had to pass and stay out of trouble to qualify for support. During annual visits they offered encouragement and guidance. Many of these students went on to university, 3 pursuing postgraduate studies. Initial charitable sponsor for income tax receipts was Warehouse of Hope in St. Catharines. Later in 2006, this became a Mission Project of Harcourt Church for 10 years serving for tax receipts for financial contributions of Fears and other donors.*



### **Annual University of Guelph International Student's (plus Family) Dinner**

*VBA Committee, 2001 to present. December in Reid Hall. Each year Ben and Norma host a table and make each guest feel special and cared for. Ben part of entertainment, serving as MC for a few years, and annually singing The Twelve Days of Christmas in a popular duet.*

### **Supporters of Environmental and Societal Activities (SENSA)**

*VBA Committee, 1999 to 2017. Meetings 2nd and 4th Friday of month, Sept. to May. Audience varying from 20 to 60. Ben arranged speakers and thanked them.*

### **VBA Library Committee, Village Centre**

*1999 to present. Policy and replacing books. Together Ben and Norma frequently took their turn shelving returned books.*

### **VBA Tree Talk, Monthly Newsletter. Circulation 640**

*Ben: regular columnist, 1998 to present. Very popular due to his warmth, humility, sense of humor and vivid recollection of old days.*

### **VBA Village Singers**

*December 1997 to present. Ben; a founding member of choir and on executive, 1999 to present, Past President and now handles publicity. 30-40 members. Yearly perform two concerts in Village and four in Guelph community at Retirement Homes. Norma sells tickets on concerts nights.*

### **VBA Empowered Sewing Group**

*Norma; 2016 when began in VBA to present. Make reusable personal hygiene products in kits for teenage girls when they have their period to avoid missing school and personal*

*embarrassment in Uganda and Kenya. With her first-hand knowledge in Uganda, Norma very helpful.*

### **Guelph General Hospital**

*December 1997 to recently. Norma; three shifts/month on 1, 3 and 5th Friday, 9.00 am to noon in C.T. Scan area. Greeting, outlining procedures, consent forms and hosting in waiting room. On Board of Volunteers at GGH for 4 years, 2006 to 2010 including 3 years as secretary. Also canvassed for excess hospital supplies to take to Uganda.*

### **Friends of the Guelph Public Library**

*Both involved for more than 10 years- transporting, sorting and tallying books for annual book sale, a fundraiser. Ben also handled promotion and dealing with media for a number of years.*

*In summary, Ben and Norma Fear have served as marvelous role models, widely admired and, no doubt, inspired many. They did not seek limelight in upfront volunteer leadership roles. Rather, Ben and Norma dedicated themselves to selected organizations, groups, individuals and youth that needed help, food or education in Niagara Falls, Guelph and Uganda. They have contributed for an unusually long time. Our congratulations and sincere thank you for your exceptional dedication, faithful and enormously generous contributions to help others.*

**Isaiah 9:6** - For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:  
and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name  
shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The  
everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

## Harcourt Calendar – December 2019

Updated November 20, 2019 – [www.harcourtuc.ca](http://www.harcourtuc.ca) for most up-to-date information

---

### Sunday December 1

#### Communion

9:00am Worship Service [C]  
10:30am Worship Service [S]  
10:30am MANNA Service [F]  
3:00pm SWESH [G]

### Monday December 2

#### Office Closed

1:30pm Prayer Shawl [202]  
7:00pm Scouts [F]  
7:00pm Communications Committee Meeting [L]

### Tuesday December 3

10:00am GWSA Exercise Program [G]  
6:45pm Cubs [G]  
7:00pm Bell Choir [M]

### Wednesday December 4

9:30am Lightshine Singers [M]  
1:30pm Tai Chi [F]  
6:30pm Guides [off-site]  
6:45pm Beavers [G]  
7:00pm Rainbow Chorus Rehearsal [S]  
7:00pm MANNA Meeting [C]

### Thursday December 5

8:45am MindStretch [C]  
1:00pm Park 'n Dance [G,K,F]  
7:30pm Choir Practice [M]

### Friday December 6

7:00pm Junior Youth Group [F,K,G]

### Saturday December 7

10:00am Progressive Christianity [202]

### Sunday December 8

9:00am Worship Service [C]  
10:30am Worship Service [S]  
10:30am MANNA Service [F]  
3:00pm SWESH [G]  
7:00pm High School Youth Group [F,K,G]

### Monday December 9

#### Office Closed

11:00am Caroline Harcourt Women's Group [F]  
7:00pm Scouts [F]

### Tuesday December 10

10:00am GWSA Exercise Program [G]  
6:45pm Cubs [G]  
7:00pm Worship Committee Meeting [C]  
7:00pm Property Committee Meeting [L]  
7:00pm Bell Choir [M]

### Wednesday December 11

7:45am Men's Group [F]  
9:30am Lightshine Singers [M]  
1:30pm Tai Chi [F]  
6:30pm Guides [F]  
6:45pm Beavers [G]  
7:00pm Rainbow Chorus Rehearsal [S]  
7:00pm Finance Committee Meeting [202]  
7:00pm M&P Meeting [L]

### Thursday December 12

8:45am MindStretch [C]  
1:00pm Park 'n Dance [G,K,F]  
7:30pm Choir Practice [M]

### Saturday December 14

10:00am Progressive Christianity [202]  
10:00am Repair Café [G]

### Sunday December 15

9:00am Worship Service [C]  
10:30am Worship Service [S]  
10:30am MANNA Service [F]  
3:00pm SWESH [G]

### Monday December 16

#### Office Closed

1:30pm Prayer Shawl [202]  
7:00pm Women's Spirituality [F]  
7:00pm Scouts [F]

**Tuesday December 17**

11:00am Stroke Recovery Lunch [F/K]  
6:45pm Cubs [G]  
7:00pm Bell Choir [M]

**Wednesday December 18**

9:30am Lightshine Singers [M]  
1:30pm Tai Chi [F]  
6:00pm Preschool [K]  
6:45pm Beavers [G]  
7:00pm Council Meeting [C]  
7:00pm Rainbow Chorus Rehearsal [S]

**Thursday December 19**

8:45am MindStretch [C]  
1:00pm Park 'n Dance [G,K,F]  
7:00pm Sharing Evening [F,C]  
7:30pm Choir Practice [M]

**Saturday December 21**

10:00am Progressive Christianity [202]

**Sunday December 22**

9:00am Worship Service [C]  
10:30am Worship Service [S]  
10:30am MANNA Service [F]

**Monday December 23****Office Closed**

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

**Tuesday December 24****Office Closed**

4:00pm Family Service/Pageant  
10:00pm Candlelight, Carols and Communion

**Wednesday December 25-Saturday December 28  
Church Closed****Sunday December 29**

10:00am Worship Service [S]

**Monday December 30-Tuesday December 31  
Church Closed**