

FLOCK TALK

Asbury and West United Church

3180 Bathurst Street, Toronto, ON M6A 2A9 Office: 416-783-6503

March 27, 2016

"The Friendly Church"

Edition 146

He is not here:

for he is risen, as he said.

Come, see the place
where the Lord lay.

Matthew 28:6



CHRIST *is* RISEN



THE PASTOR'S PEN



"Signs of New Life"

Spring-like weather has come early this year. The church season of Easter also comes early this year. It is fitting that spring coincides with Easter. Easter is about new life and new beginnings. We celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is what our faith is based upon. Without the resurrection, there would be no Christianity!

This Easter season, I invite you to look for signs of new life, to be open to the unexpected and to believe in new possibilities.

I am honoured to be with you at this time in your journey as your part-time supply minister. I give thanks for the joyous covenanting service held jointly with Toronto Conference and the South West Presbytery on Sunday, January 17. I am thankful for the volunteers who serve on the various committees and for new folks stepping up. I have seen signs of renewed life and energy:

Newcomers' gathering hosted by the Pastoral Care and Membership Team, on Sunday, Jan. 24, at which 18 adults and 3 children attended, with 6 long-time members present;

Youth Group gathering on Feb. 7 and March 6, at which 9 youth attended;

Our Senior choir and music director Paolo Busato continue to gift us each Sunday with their musical leadership and anthems;

Jan. 3 Epiphany Sunday when everyone was invited to come forward to light a candle and to share a prayer of thanksgiving;

Jan. 10 Baptism of the Lord Sunday during which all lined up to pick up a stone from the baptismal font as a reminder of their baptism;

Feb. 28 Black History service at which the "Ubuntu" troop shared their culture through dance and drumming, and Sheila Mascoll paid tribute to Mildred Franklin and Joyce Rhoden;

At our Annual meeting on Feb. 21, with a leap of faith, people voted to accept a deficit budget and committed to do their best to fundraise to make up the shortfall.

Spring is a season that stimulates hope. Streams and rivers filled with melted snow will begin to run again. Crocuses and tulips pop out of the ground. Fruit trees will be cloaked in blossoms. There is new life; it is the cycle of life! We are the people of resurrection, and as Christians, we believe that death will not be the last word, no matter what happens.

I'll close with the lyrics of "In the Bulb There is a Flower" found in Voices United 703:

"In the bulb there is a flower, in the seed, an apple tree,

In cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!

In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,

Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see."

May you and your family experience the hope and new life that Easter brings!

*Blessings,
Rev. Irene Ty*



Covenanting Service
with Rev. Irene
January 17



Newcomers' gathering
January 24



Youth Group meeting
February 7



Ubuntu Dance/
Drum Troop
February 28



Sheila Mascoll
& Janiss Johnson
presenting to
Joyce Rhoden

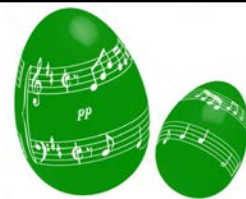


SENIOR CHOIR

I would like to begin with expressing my sincere thanks to all the members of our Asbury and West Choir for their commitment, dedication, hard work and talent. It is a great pleasure working with them week after week and although we are not a large group we sing beautifully with a lot of heart and take on many challenging pieces of any variety and execute them with brilliance.

The choir has had a busy winter season and we are looking forward to holy week and Easter. In the last few weeks we have been serenaded by Pauline with a beautiful solo, Lola singing a medley of Negro spirituals during our Black History month service as well as Catriona singing a passionate version of Amazing Grace. Bravo to all three ladies for singing so wonderfully and with some encouragement there is more to follow. We were thrilled to have our Christmas concert profiled in Snap'd North Toronto in February and hope you enjoyed some of the photos.

Jocelyn Shewalter-Patterson provided me with a special piece for Good Friday that is close to her heart called "The Watchers". It was written by her husband Harvey Patterson with words by Charles



Blanden. We were happy and honoured to sing this delicate and precious piece on Good Friday together with Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Pie Jesu" from his Requiem. We have been preparing for the Easter service as well and wish everyone a Happy and Blessed Easter.

We look forward to spring and hope to maybe have some musical guests in the near future.

Be such to support the Spring Hymn Sing fundraising event on Thursday, April 28th sponsored by Council. The members of the choir will be participating. Come one come all and let us sing up a storm to the Glory of God.

Paolo Busato, Choir Director



Christ sacrifice life rejoice joy Jesus hope crucifixion SAVIOR
He is RISEN
 REDEEMER amazing grace LOVE mercy
 Studio 89



PHOEBE CLEVERLEY - WALKING WITH JESUS

(Spoken at church service Sunday, March 13)

Having wanted to travel to the Middle East since I was a teenager, I was delighted to sign on with Craig Travel for their Holy Land Pilgrimage in November of 2012. The leaders were a United Church couple, Reverend Peter Scott and his wife Rev. Heather Scott.

I was quite overwhelmed by the beauty and variety within this small country, as well as its historical and religious significance for the three great lines from Abraham; Islam, Judaism and Christianity. We began our trip by driving up the Mediterranean coast in our air-conditioned Mercedes-Benz bus to historic Caesarea and our modern hotel in nearby Netanya. We drove inland the next day, every hour exploring new wonders; Mt. Carmel, the Jezreel Valley, sometimes along the stored road to Damascus to our first view of Lake Galilee, a breathtaking visit with snow-capped Mt. Herman to the north and the dry mountains of Syria and Jordan beyond the eastern shore. Our home for four days was the Kibbutz.

Guest House of Ma'agan across the Jordan River, where we could explore the beautiful gardens and lawns leading down to a small beach. It was a bit late in the year for swimming, but I paddled in the cool, fresh water and watching birds. Israel is on a major fly-route, so birds were migrating from Europe south

to Africa and beyond. One of my favourite side-trip was sailing out of Tiberias on a boat built in the style of the time of Christ. As we shared the waves with many small fishing boats, plying their ancient trade to supply the homes and hotels with fresh fish.

One of the more remarkable sites was Tabgha, where there is a church sanctifying the miracles of the loaves and fishes, with an amazing mosaic floor. The floor pictured many birds, animals, and fish, sources of the lake, Jordan River

baptismal site, Jerusalem, Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, view of the Old City, over a large Jewish and Muslim cemetery, the Kodrou valley, Al Ogba Mosque. Many church sites, via Delerosa, Tower of David, Garden of the Tomb, Holy Communion.

South desert and dry craggy hills, the Dead Sea, Merada, amazing palaces and fortresses, Eon Gedi – David's cave – with spring and pool, green oasis, families, sheep in green pastures and smaller brown cattle on the hills. Art by Marc Chagall in sculptures and mosaics showed joy and a closeness to Jesus that was shared with other believers (at that time a Nigerian group in colourful national dress) from all over the world. A walk with Jesus. A spiritual blessing.



Joyce Rhoden is at it again. She is planning a fundraising bake sale!!! She is looking for EVERYONE to pitch in and help. To quote Joyce "Unless you can't move....." Boy, Joyce is tough, but she loves her church and is determined to raise some money.
Stay tuned for details.
You go girl!!!

We are also collecting Canadian Tire money to assist with future purchases. Please consider this form of donation to your church.



LOONIE BIN = COPPER KETTLE

We have collected \$37.50 in the Copper Kettle since the beginning 2016. The Walk-up Sunday offering using the copper kettle netted \$187.50.

Can you help beat last year? Please drop your change in the big copper kettle, folding money also accepted.

Thank you for your support!

THOUGHTS ON AN OBSERVER ARTICLE

Once in a while, something that I read brings clarity to my thinking. In the latest Observer, Christopher White wrote about "a narrative of death, as opposed to resurrection." However, he was not writing about Easter, but about the way that an Easter people should behave. He called on us to stop looking backwards but to serve this world as it is, and not the world of our memory.

Rev. White's article brought to my mind, some other comments that I have heard lately, at meetings, from church leaders and our own pulpit. "We are driving into the future by looking in the rear view mirror." "The sixties are over. You can bury your head in the sand and pretend that it is not true, but that won't help." "If you don't change what you are doing, you will continue to dwindle."

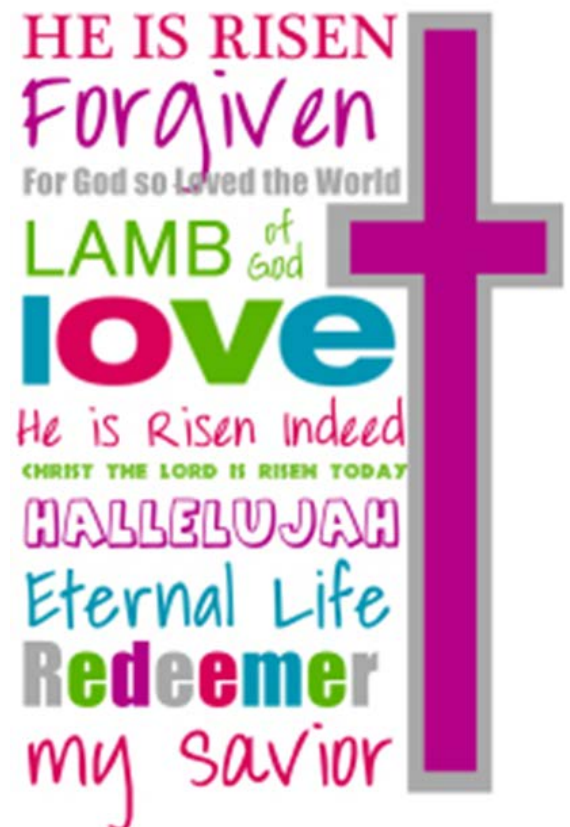
Pretty grim predictions, and likely to make one feel helpless. Fortunately, I have also met with real encouragement from other United Church folk. The Edge project was established to help congregations to refocus and find ways to continue our ministry into the future. In the Toronto area, one important focus is expanding use of our buildings to welcome the community, and in this way, to combine outreach with income. Several of our fellow congregations are well along with this development, and they are now both financially sound and also able to fund their ministry programs.

Our congregation has gone about as far as we can go with offering our building, because we do not have enough people to manage activities. But a recent visitor to Asbury and West offered encouragement and an idea. This was the program manager from a very successful church. Her congregation is small, but they have maximized the use of the building in their community to the point where they need a full time worker to manage it.

Our visitor recommended that we invest in a staff person for our church, but of course, I could not see any way that we could afford one! But another visit to the Edge website gave some guidance.

Edge has a group of experts who offer help in writing grant proposals. They report that only 6% of United Churches apply for grants, and in 2015, that small group received \$2.5 million between them. When we know where we want to go, then we can look for some financial help to get us started. I recommend a visit to the Edge website. www.edge-ucc.ca

Pauline McKenzie





FINANCE MINISTRY

At the Annual General Meeting Finance Ministry asked the Congregation to approve \$33,400.00 deficit budget. Asbury and West expect to spend \$33,400.00 more than we expect to receive in revenue. This is an extremely bad situation. This is not our first deficit budget but previously we had a financial safety net; the Building Renovation Fund. All building renovation money has now been spent or returned to general funds.

Prior to the 2016 budget, Finance Ministry could only guess at what our true costs would be because we had not been in the building for a full year. When Finance Ministry prepared the 2016 budget knowing the cost of operations for a full year, we were alarmed at the amount of the deficit. Finance informed Church Council who struck a special committee to examine each budget line item. Changes were made but the result was still a deficit. The full Church Council met to examine the budget. Once again each line item was closely reviewed but the 2016 deficit remained at \$33,400.00. Expenses for 2016 are expected to be \$19,800.00 per month. The problem is that the amount of revenue that we expect to receive is \$17,000.00 per month. We do everything that we can to reduce expenses but many are not within our ability to control. We need more revenue to cover those expenses.

58% of our total revenue comes from short and long term rentals. We are fortunate to have two long-term rent-paying tenants. Property Ministry works very hard to arrange short term rentals. This reliable income helps a lot but it is not enough.

Let's talk about donations through the collection plate. I was extremely disappointed with the results of the last Stewardship Pledge Campaign. Phoebe Cleverly, Chair of Stewardship Ministry, did her best to convince us of the need to share our "time, talents and treasure". She asked all of us to be generous! The final result of the Stewardship Pledge Campaign was a 20% drop in pledges to support local operations and a 36% drop in support for Mission and Services.

What I find truly shocking is that we only raised \$6,940.00 or 3% of total revenue through fund raising events in 2015. We need new and exciting fund raising events that will attract our neighbours. Fund raising events can be fun. These events can bring us together as a congregation. They can introduce new and old neighbours to our church building. Our Christmas concert was spectacular. About 50 performers came to entertain us. The problem was, there were about 50 people in the audience to enjoy it.

The 2015 fiscal year ended up with a surplus thanks to the generosity of Dell Park Co-operative and Michel Labbe, the President of Options for homes. Their gift of \$275,000.00 helped us finish the renovations and pay down our debts. This donation gives us a chance to gain control of our Church Family finances but time is short and the need to act is urgent. We cannot expect another windfall in 2016. It is up to us now. This church has served the Bathurst and Lawrence community for 204 years. Are we going to be the first generation in all that time who fails to keep the Asbury and West United Church doors open?

*Alan McKenzie
Chair of Finance*



ARE YOU ON P.A.R?

Have you thought about making your church donation by P.A.R. (Pre-Authorized Remittance)? Through PAR, automatic monthly withdrawals are made from your bank account. PAR is easy to set up and can be adjusted at any time should your circumstances change, simply speak to Cheryl Holliday, in confidence, about the process. If you are already on PAR, don't forget that you can increase your donation at anytime.

Thank you for your support!





MEMBERSHIP AND PASTORAL CARE MINISTRY

The minister and members of the group met for a "getting to know you" session after service. We met in the meeting room where snacks were served, we also handed out a form called "get connected" that gathered information about how they would like to be involved as well as basic contact information. On March 6th the minister and four others attended a workshop on inspiring ministries, called the "Welcoming Church". The event was held at Westway United Church in Etobicoke.

Finally we are in the process of updating our church directory as we continue to welcome new members to our congregation.

Mel Beckles for Chair

Asbury and West Cookbooks, filled with delicious recipes from our own and past members, are still available for \$10 each. They make great Bridal Shower or Mother's Day gifts! Also Asbury and West pins are available for \$5 each. Please see Cheryl Holliday to purchase either item.



FUNDRAISING AFTER- CHURCH LUNCH

On Sunday March 13 a delicious aroma wafted from the kitchen from pots of homemade soup; broccoli, cauliflower cheese and hearty vegetable. Sandwiches of egg, salmon, tuna and Black Forest ham on white or brown bread rounded out the menu.

This fundraising event was spearheaded by Joyce Rhoden and the food was prepared with the help of Veronica Ennis, Cheryl Holliday, Janiss Johnson, Rosaline Johnson, and Pauline McKenzie.

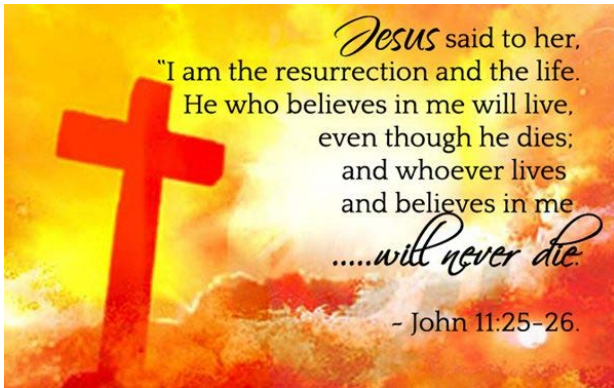
Donations were made by those staying for lunch, folks that had to rush off without eating, and friends of Joyce from outside the church. Many donations generously exceeded the nominal cost of \$5 per person or \$10 for a family.

CONGRATULATIONS to Joyce on her fundraising event and THANK YOU to everyone who contributed to the \$331.00 that was raised.

Lunch for a very reasonable charge, fellowship with one another and raising money for the church. What a perfect combination.

Do you have an after-church lunch idea? Do you have delicious recipes to share? Please consider sponsoring a fundraising after-church lunch.





Don't forget Mother's Day on Sunday, May 8



IRENE TUCK - WALKING WITH JESUS

(Spoken at church service Sunday, March 13)

This was a trip of a lifetime. Being in the land where Jesus walked, visiting the places where he lived and preached, sharing these moments with my friends from this church, my husband Lee and son David – it was incredible.

Thanks to Doug McKenzie, our minister at the time and our leader, and to our tour guide, we were able to visit some beautiful and historical places. Ones that stick out in my mind are the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus prayed, the tree believed to be the one that Zacchaeus sat in while waiting for Jesus to pass by, and the mountain where Jesus preached to the multitude. I remember placing a prayer in a crack of the Western Wall, and taking a sample of water from the Jordan River for my granddaughter's baptism.

A funny incident took place in Jerusalem. A car had parked in the bus parking spot. No problem. Doug, Scott, Peter and another Doug just picked up one end of the car and moved it out of the way. I think there is a picture in the photo album we brought today.

One might think it would be dangerous going to Israel due to all the unrest. But our tour guide was

kept informed about any trouble. We always felt perfectly safe. The only time we experienced a change in our plans was when we tried to visit Bethlehem. A soldier standing guard near the entrance to the Bethlehem office of the Israeli Interior Ministry had been shot and killed. This was near site of the Church of the Nativity, built over the cave where Jesus is said to have been born. We went back to Bethlehem the next day and visited this church.

Most of the time we stayed in hotels but we also had the opportunity to stay in a kibbutz or an agricultural community. It was quite rugged, very down to earth, yet an enjoyable part of the whole tour experience. Other highlights were our visits to the many beautiful synagogues, temples and mosques, as well as to numerous biblical sites and archeological digs.

All in all, this trip was an amazing life experience that touched my heart and soul. I can truly say that "I walked today where Jesus walked, and felt Him close to me."

CHURCH COUNCIL

Thank you to the members of the congregation who attended our Annual General Meeting in February and voted unanimously to accept our deficit budget for 2016. What I am really thanking you for is your commitment to take an active part in our ongoing fundraising efforts.

How can you be active? Just follow these 7 simple steps.

1. Share your fundraising ideas no matter how big or small.
2. Enlist the help of others to get your ideas up and running.
3. Speak with enthusiasm about all fundraising event.
4. Spread the word to your family, friends, neighbours, colleagues and ask for their support.
5. Practise generosity with your time to help and to attend events and with your financial support.
6. Enjoy the fun and fellowship and thank the people who made it happen.
7. Encourage others to follow steps 1 through 7.

We have already had a terrific soup and sandwich lunch, an excellent movie matinee and we are looking forward to the Council sponsored Spring Hymn Sing. Plans have started for a Spaghetti Lunch, a Bake Sale and a Yard Sale. We are on our way!

I have every confidence that we will have some terrific fundraising events. I have faith that we will all work together to make our events successful. We are blessed to have this opportunity to make our church stronger. If you are not convinced, please go back and read steps 1 through 7.

Blessings,
Jocelyn Shewalter-Patterson
Council Chair



MINISTRY GROUPS and COMMITTEES

COMMUNICATIONS

Chair: Vacancy

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Chair: Cheryl Holliday
Council Rep: Kim Davidson

FINANCE

Chair: Alan McKenzie

HOSPITALITY

Chair: Lou Rhoden

HUMAN RESOURCES

Chair: Sheila Mascoll

MEMBERSHIP AND PASTORAL CARE

Chair: Ianthe Spencer

PROPERTY

Chair: Pauline McKenzie

STEWARDSHIP

Chair: Phoebe Cleverley

WORSHIP, SACRAMENT AND MUSIC

Chair: Sylvia Shewalter-Nielsen

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

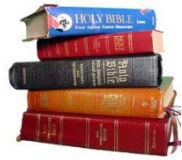
Chair: Cheryl Holliday

MEMORIAL Committee
Cheryl Holliday, David Tuck

PRESBYTERY REPRESENTATIVE

Vacancy

Council Chair:
Jocelyn Shewalter-Patterson



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY

Church School

The Story of David has been the focus of our lessons since January and will continue for a couple of Sundays after Easter. The children have been busy making poster boards to illustrate the story in picture form.

A recent development - We are happy to announce that Emma McKenzie has been "promoted" to Nursery helper. Emma is part of the newly formed Youth Group and helping in the Church School was one of the areas the younger people felt they could contribute.

Mark your calendars – On Sunday, April 17, our Church Anniversary, the children and the Christian Education Ministry Group will be hosting a Spaghetti Lunch after the service. Free-will offering.



A guest to our church, Karen Seunarine, Stewardship Officer from Toronto Conference told us that the Eucharist is part of this picture. If you look closely at his forehead near the hairline, you will see the cup (as a white light) and to the right a circle which represents water. For a closer look at this picture of Christ, it's on the wall in the meeting room.

Youth

Yes, we now have a youth group, presently under the leadership of Rev. Irene Ty, Cheryl Holliday and Melvyn Beckles. At the first meeting we spent some time getting to know each other, and then brainstormed the kinds of activities we might get involved. At the second meeting we tried to get organized a bit better. It has been decided so far that we will definitely meet on the first Sunday of the month.

We are so pleased to announce that Melissa Nielsen has been nominated by Council to attend the 92nd Toronto Conference in May as a youth representative for our church, being held in Midland. Also four of our members will be attending a Youth Encounter Retreat in the Spring sponsored by the Southwest Presbytery, this one to be held in Minden. We look forward to hearing from all of them about their experiences.

*Cheryl Holliday
Co-ordinator*



*"It was love, not the
nails, that held Jesus
to the cross."*

GAMES PLUS MORE



Easter Word Search

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Spear
Stone
Temple
Thieves
Three Days
Tomb

Angels
Apostles
Betrayal
Blood
Calvary
Cross
Crown of Thorns
Crucifixion
Darkness
Death
Earthquake
Easter
High Priest
Jesus Christ
Joseph
King
Lamb

Easter Bunny Maze

Match the Decorated Eggs

Look closely at the eggs in the first row. Draw a line from the eggs in the first row to the matching eggs in the second row. When you're done, you can colour the eggs.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY



Joybreak

We are looking forward to our March meeting. Irene Fair will be attending so we can formally say goodbye and thanks to her, as well as present her with a gift. More on this get together next time.

Chocolate sales went very well on Valentine's Day and as they did on Easter Sunday. If you would like to buy chocolates on any Sunday, please see one of the Joybreak members. They are \$2.00 a box.

*Cheryl Holliday
Chair, Women's Ministries*



UCW:

On Friday March 4, some members of the UCW, and others, attended the World Day of Prayer service. This year the service, entitled "Receive

Children, Receive Me" was written by the World Day of Prayer Committee in Cuba. Many churches in the Southwest Presbytery came together at the host church, Melrose (Baptist) Community Church to pray, worship, learn and share in some traditional Cuban food.

World Day of Prayer is a worldwide celebration that observes a common day of prayer each year. It is a movement initiated and carried out by women of various races, cultures and traditions in more than 170 countries and regions.

In 2017, the theme will be "Am I Being Unfair to You" written by the women of Philippines.

THAT ALL MAY BE ONE (JOHN 17:21)

In 1965, shortly after Zambia's independence, three church/mission societies came together to form the United Church of Zambia. United Church of Canada personnel were present and the UCC has enjoyed and nurtured a partnership with the UCZ since that time. For its 50th anniversary celebration (in January) the UCZ organized a Sunday morning public worship service in the Nkana soccer stadium (Kitwe) with the President of the Republic as guest of honour (H.E. Mr E.C. Lungu). Also in attendance was an adherent of the Asbury and West congregation. I spent 18 years working, as an agriculturalist, in Zambia, and from '94 – 2004 was the UCC Africa Secretary responsible for partner relations in East and Central Africa. (The UCC was invited, but the Moderator, General Secretary and Africa Secretary were unable to go.)

In my comments (speech) to the thousands present, I made reference to notable UCC personalities who worked with the UCZ but also to the significant assistance provided by UCZ clergy to our work in Canada through Mutuality in Mission, Face to Face and Partner in Residence programmes. In addition, the current General Secretary of The UCZ, Rev Dr Peggy Mulambya Kabonde is the partner representative at all UCC General Council Executive meetings.

After the ceremony I was privileged to visit the original UCZ theological college which has now become a university and to learn more of the growth and programmes of the UCZ throughout the country.



Lee Holland



DAVID TUCK - WALKING WITH JESUS

(Spoken at church service Sunday, March 13)

Rev. Douglas McKenzie announced to the congregation that he would like to take a group of people to Israel. He called it "Follow the Footsteps of Jesus". Thirty-three people signed up and in March 1988 we landed in Tel Aviv. What an amazing experience it was! It was a privilege to visit the many places where Jesus walked. You will recognize some of the familiar names.

They include Ashdod Ashkelon (Herod's birthplace), Beer Sheva (Abraham's Well), Jaffa (Simon the Tanner's house), Caesarea (Herod's Amphitheatre and the Roman Hippodrome), Haifa (Stella Maris Monastery on Mt. Carmel) and Megiddo (Canaanite Temple at Mt. Tabor), Nazareth (Jesus' childhood home) and the Basilica of the Annunciation, the synagogue where he preached, and Mary's Well. Highlights included Tiberias where we sailed on the Sea of Galilee and saw a boat at the bottom of the sea believed to be one of the fishermen's boats. I went swimming here. The Mount of the Beatitudes; Jordan River – After walking down the path where people entered to be baptized by John the Baptist, Doug baptized me; Capernaum – entered through the gate of the White Synagogue aka The Synagogue of Jesus; visited Mount Hermon; Metulla – the Golan Heights; Beth Alpha and Tabgha – Doug served us communion at the Church of the Multiplication (site of the miracle of the seven loaves and fishes); Beth She'an – location of the Roman Amphitheatre; Jericho – excavation site of the wall of Jericho, the Inn of the Good Samaritan, and the sycamore tree believed to be the one that Zacchaeus climbed; Wadi Qelt – the Greek Orthodox Monastery; Masada – the Northern Palace aka Herod's Palace.

Other points of interest were Qumran Valley (the Dead Sea Scrolls were found here), Dead Sea (I floated in the sea – held up by the salt), Jerusalem (Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane and the tomb where Jesus was laid to rest), The Western Wall, Dome of the Rock (Muslim shrine and location of Foundation Rock believed to be where Abraham prepared to sacrifice

Isaac), and Mount Moriah (Isaac lies under Abraham's knife and a threshing floor that bore David's altar and later Solomon's Temple).

We visited the Upper Room at Mount Zion. King David's tomb is under the Upper Room. When I touched the banner where David lies I felt a spiritual sensation. We went into the Upper Room and to the Pater Noster Chapel where it is thought that Jesus taught his disciple's the Lord's Prayer.

The Golden Gate is significant – in the Jewish faith this gate will remain sealed until the Messiah returns to open it. At Bethlehem we went to the Church of the Nativity and the spot where it is believed Jesus was born. I lit a candle there and Doug read the Christmas story.

On the way to Jerusalem we stopped at the place where the Parable of the Mustard Seed was told and the mountain where Jesus preached to the 5000. No matter where you stood, people would have been able to hear Jesus preach.

On our return from Jerusalem we went through the Lion's Gate where Jesus started carrying his cross (aka the Via Delorosa) and stopped at the 6 stations. We then went to the Holy Sepulchre Altar and the Chapel of the Crucifixion.

I collected many mementos from my trip – a menorah; a pot made from the clay where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found (also holds a piece of the scroll); a wooden cup and a large olive wood Last Supper carving from Jerusalem; a necklace from Nazareth bearing my name written in Hebrew.

We all received an Attestation of Pilgrimage certificate that says – "By this attestation be it known that David Tuck by virtue of fulfilling the Biblical injunction has ascended to Jerusalem, the Holy City, Capital of Israel and is henceforth authorized to bear the title of – "Jerusalem Pilgrim".



GETTING TO KNOW YOU - MY CONVERSATION WITH VERNON

On Sunday, February 28 our church had a wonderful celebration of Black History month, with gospel songs, personal stories, a lively and engaging drum and dance performance by the children and young people of the UBUNTO group, special prayers and Rev. Irene Ty's sermon, "Celebrating the Journey". The service was followed by a delicious buffet, Caribbean style. The planning team included Vernon Hendrickson, Janiss Johnson, Sheila Mascoll, Lola Pinnock, Lou and Joyce Rhoden. Lola, a soprano in our choir, produced her big, deep gospel voice to sing "Previous Lord, Take My Hand". Many thanks to Paulo, our Music Director and the team for bringing us such an uplifting message to freedom and loving care.

I thought you would enjoy hearing a little more of Vernon Hendrickson's own personally journey, especially as he received a Community Appreciation Award for community service, in honour of black History Month, on February 22nd from MACCA. Quiz question...What is MACCA? Answer: Markham African Caribbean Canadian Association.

Vernon was born in Nevin, Leeward Island, and part of the British West Indies in the beautiful Caribbean Sea. His parents were conservative, his Mother a staunch Methodist. He attended a private elementary school located on the first floor of her church, during the week. He graduated from the local secondary school and took a job with the Department of Agriculture, growing yams, potatoes, peas, onions, cassava, etc. His parents believe that the abundant harvest should be shared and Vernon was able to help others through his gardening skills. As on many of the islands, there were extensive sugar cane fields where labour was hard, underpaid, with little relief from the hot sun. The sugar from these estates was shipped to England to be refined.

Vernon and his wife, Shirley, a teacher born the neighbouring island of St. Kitts, were married while quiet young. The family immigrated to Canada and Vernon, keen to continue his education, enrolled at York University, where he studied Political Science and graduated with an Honours BA. He wasn't hired as a teacher, but took a job with Sun Newspapers and became a supervisor in their circulation department.

I commended that many black people who came to Canada for better opportunities have been hugely successful in the arts, especially music, law and politics, in medicine and even in law enforcement. I asked about

violent treatment by police, especially of young black men, and sometimes their lack of respect toward black women. He agreed that prejudice and discrimination still exists in our society. An apartment may be "already rented", or a job "filled", based on a person's colour or accent. His son, returning from work late at night in the family car, was stopped by police. He was able to show his licence and papers, and the officers backed off.

Vernon says he gets along with everyone and enjoys a full life with a broad range of interest and friends. He has been a soccer player and is a good swimmer. He is now an insurance broker, a supporter of the Liberal Party and his local MP, and is an enthusiastic community volunteer. He reads widely and mentioned Robin Hood and his merry men as boyhood heroes.

Asked about the problem of absent fathers, he agreed it is very sad for children to grow up with no father as a role model. It's a big challenge for their mothers also and these families need support from their community and the opportunity to engage in sports or games such as chess, taking part in a choir, or learning to play steel drums. Programs to help steer young people away from excessive drinking, drugs, and gang violence, to encourage them to stay in school, to get an education, in order to achieve a place in society, are of primary importance. This is especially true in an area such as Jane and Finch. Vernon has taken donated books to a community centre in a Catholic school near there and mentioned a barber shop near Jane & Wilson as a place to meet people from the black community.

The Christian churches can help by bringing the message of God's love for all of his/her people. Jesus reached out to me and women at every level of society and from every cultural background, with a special welcome for children. Canada and southwester Ontario in particular, played a major role as the destination for black people fleeing slavery via the Underground Railroad in the 19th century. We have been greatly enriched by the contributions of those who came from the American South, and more recently from the Caribbean. Vernon agrees that we still have a way to go before reaching equal opportunity and acceptance for all our citizens.

God calls us to walk with each other, to share His love and to shine brightly in His beautiful world He has given us.

Phoebe Cleverley





IANTHE SPENCER - WALKING WITH JESUS

(Spoken at church service Sunday, March 13)

First let me say that I really do not like flying and I don't do heights.

When the late Rev. Doug announced that he would be leading a group to the Holy Land and whoever wanted to go could speak to him, I prayed about it. I knew I wanted to go but there was some unrest in Israel at that time and those of you who know me know that I am not bold. I received an answer to my pray, 'Go, you will be safe'.

On a Sunday afternoon in of 1988 a group of members and friends of Asbury and West flew to Israel, stopping in Denmark first.

I remember when we arrived at Ben Gurion Airport I was excited, anxious, and happy. We were then taken to Tel Aviv where we spent the night. I cannot remember in order the places we visited but I remember that each morning before we would go to a site, Doug or a member of our group would read the portion of scripture where we would be going.

I remember going to Ashkelon where we visited a park and Doug's son climbed a Carob tree. We were then introduced to the crown of thorns. It was at that time that I really felt moved. Tears came to my eyes as the reality of the story was before my eyes. I knew that the Bible told us all these things but seeing is something. We saw St Peter's house and the sea of Jaffa where Jonah sailed from. We went to Beersheba and met some Israeli girls in training for the army. They were very friendly and allowed us to take pictures with them. They spoke Hebrew but their smiles welcomed us.

There were places that brought real emotions to my life. Going across the Sea of Galilee from Tiberius to Capernaum. As we got off the boat we saw an old Synagogue where it is said Jesus taught. We visited the Mount where Jesus spoke the words of the Beatitudes and where Jesus fed the five thousand. Doug gave us communion there; he took a small roll and broke it and gave it to us.

Other places interest were, the Jordon River where Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist. I remember the long walk through the Via Dolorosa. I imagined Jesus stumbling along there with the cross on his back. This was very spiritual for me. We went to a synagogue service where women were not allowed to sit with the men. The women sat upstairs and men sat downstairs. We also visited a Mosque which we had to remove our shoes as they were praying and kissing the ground. We went to Church at the Garden Tomb; this was another emotional moment for me. The Mount of the Transfiguration, the Jerica road to the Dead Sea, the dip in the Dead Sea where the water was different. You did not have to swim as it kept you afloat. Such an experience.

When I was a little girl in Sunday School, I was sure these places were above the skies. After walking where Jesus walked, seeing his birthplace, the place of his crucifixion, the whole experience felt to me like I was walking through the Bible. I felt closer to Jesus and I felt like a whole person. I came back with feelings of joy. I was so blessed to be on that trip. Ever since that trip I think that I am a better person from that experience. It is real. Jesus is real.



*"Volunteers are not paid
-- not because they are
worthless, but because
they are priceless."*



THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who came to support not only me but also our church in our quest of defeating our evil villain "debt". It meant a lot to me that the people of the church came out to support my first movie matinee. Twenty-seven people attend the movie entitled "Facing the Giants", which won a Dove Award for family viewing.

A special thank you to the following people who supported the event: Cheryl, Melvyn, Ianthe, Mildred, Marjorie, Dorothy, Kay, Glenda, Janiss, Icyline, Rachel, Sharon, Lola, Jocelyn, Harvey, Phoebe, Sylvia, Harel, Paolo, Catriona, Lynsia, Lucille, Pauline, Alan, Irene, Lee, Yvonne, Heather, Lou, Connie, Shelia, and Hailey. With everyone's help, I am pleased to announce that this event raised \$420.

I look forward to seeing you all at the next movie.

Melissa Nielsen



Everyone enjoying
the movie



Refreshment
counter

Your church Council is in need of volunteers. We have vacancies that must be filled for the position of Chair for our Communication Ministry, Mission and Outreach Ministry and as well needing a Presbytery Representative.

Additionally, we have two key people who will be passing the torch. Pauline McKenzie, Chair Property Ministry will be resigning her position at the end of June. Alan McKenzie is resigning his position as Chair Finance Ministry no later than the end of this year. Pauline and Alan have given tirelessly in their positions, particularly with their lead roles in our recent renovation project. We have been blessed with their service to our church.

As with many volunteer jobs, previous experience is not mandatory; please give prayerful consideration to this opportunity to participate and contribute. The role of Chair can be done jointly; please consider sharing this service with a friend. You are welcome to be part of a Ministry without attending all regular meetings; please consider where your talents will best be utilized. You do not need to be part of a Ministry to serve; please consider sharing your skills. Your time will be valued; please consider how you can lend a helpful hand.

Blessings,
Jocelyn Shewalter-Patterson
Council Chair



Easter greetings!

Calendar of Events



March

March 27 - Happy Easter, Alleluia He Has Risen!

April

April 1 - Church service 6:00 AM (Kidding - April Fool's Days!!)
 April 7 - Sader Supper at Adath Israel Congregation, 7pm at 37 Southbourne Ave, Toronto
 April 17 - Our 204th Anniversary, followed by a Spaghetti Lunch
 April 28 - Spring Hymn Sing Fundraiser, 7pm at Asbury and West

May

May 8 - Mother's Day
 May 13 - Senior's trip to Roy Thompson Hall



PROPERTY MINISTRY



Property Group at Work:

Our group continues to work to keep our building in good shape. We are very grateful for Alvaro, our custodian, who is the key person in caring for the property. Besides keeping the building clean and maintaining the inventory of janitorial supplies, he sets up for meetings, makes minor repairs and supervises maintenance personnel. Alvaro does all this in 20 hours a week.

In other maintenance news: we decided to make a change in maintenance companies for the small lift. OTIS, who maintain the large elevator very well, have agreed to care for the small lift also. We also continue to be very pleased with the service provided by our heating and cooling firm.

There have been some difficulties with the daycare alarm going off unexpectedly. Our security firm are working to eliminate the difficulties. We are trying to be patient as they trace the fault, since the key maintenance technician for our system died very suddenly at Christmas time.

Our request: we ask that everybody put thing back where they got them, to avoid frustration by other persons. A few of the items that have gone AWOL recently: the tape dispenser from Cate's desk, found eventually on the lectern in the church; a mike stand belonging to Immanuel, found in the church office; the key to the key safe, found eventually at the back of a different drawer. We ask that we all try to remember to put things back where we got them.

New Developments:

Two funeral service companies are asking to use our building to provide church funerals. Most of these services take place on weekdays. We hosted our second wedding on February 27th. Cranbrooke Village are using our church for their owners' meetings, and a social worker is meeting with a group of teens on alternate Saturdays. We can open our building to the community if we have enough helpers, and we are very grateful for our two new volunteers. All of these building users are both outreach and a source of income for our congregation.

Pauline McKenzie, Chair



The Young at Heart Seniors have started their program for 2016.

We started with a Valentine Lunch and a movie, celebrated Black History Month and our St. Patrick's celebration included our Irish Stew lunch.

We are looking forward to the visit to Roy Thompson Hall on Friday, May 13th and our bus trip on June 8th to Big Creek Boat Farm and Cruise on the Grand River.

Let us remind you that if you have the time, we meet the second and fourth Thursday of every month, all are welcome to join us.

*Melvyn and Shirley Beckles,
Group Contacts*



As we all know fund raising is very important in sustaining the life of a church; ours is no difference. As you do your spring cleaning chores, rather than 'trash' those unwanted items - consider donating them to our sale.

Please mark your calendars once again for the anticipated event of Saturday June 4, 2016 for our YARD SALE at 9 AM. Look out for further information and flyers.

*Yvonne Wright,
Co-ordinator*

AN EXCERPT FROM ONE SOLITARY LIFE by James A. Francis

He was born in an obscure village the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in still another village where He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty, and then for three years He was an itinerant preacher.

He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family. He never owned a house. He never went to college. He never visited a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place where He was born. He did none of the things one usually associates with greatness. He had no credentials but Himself.

He was only thirty-three when the tide of public opinion turned against Him. His friends ran away. He was turned over to His enemies and went through the mockery of a trial.

He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While He was dying His executioners gambled for His clothing, the only property He had on earth. When He was dead He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Twenty centuries have come and gone, and today Jesus is the central figure of the human race, the leader of mankind's progress.

All the armies that have ever marched, all the navies that have ever sailed, all the parliaments that have ever sat, all the kings that have ever reigned put together have not affected the life of mankind on this earth as much as that *one solitary life*.



Carrying the Cross

On Palm Sunday, April 8, 1990 "Carrying the Cross" stained glass window was dedicated by members of the congregation in loving memory of former members of Asbury and West United Church.



The Empty Tomb

"The Empty Tomb" stained glass window was given by the Choir at the evening Christmas Candlelight service in 1994. This window was dedicated to God's glory in music and in honour of choir members past, present and future. This window completed the last in the series of eighteen windows in our sanctuary.



The Resurrection

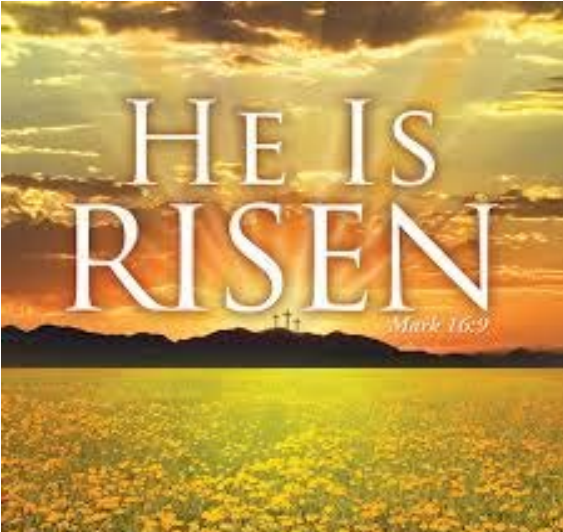
"The Resurrection" stained glass window is another beautiful congregational window from gifts and memorial donations to loved ones and former members of Asbury and West United Church. This window was dedicated on Sunday, October 6, 1985.



FROM THE EDITORS' DESK

At this Easter time, we invite you to remember our beautiful stained glass windows and the story they tell us. Take time to pray in the Garden of Gethesemane, walk the road to Calvary, and rejoice at the Empty Tomb.

Jocelyn & Sylvia



Asbury and West United Church

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Have you taken a few minutes in the past week to pray for members of our congregation who are in poor health, or who are unable to get out? Take a minute to phone one or two, or call to make some personal visits, or send out a couple of cards just to let them know we care about them. Please let the church office know if we have forgotten any one.

HOME MEMBERS

Cecil Anderson

Myra Badley

Joyce Bullock

Fredrica Cameron

Bea Cares

Betty Enta

Mildred Franklin

Evelyn Lyon

Helen Smith

Fred Sunahara



NEXT DEADLINE – Sunday, June 5, 2016
Next Edition – Father's Day, Sunday, June 19, 2016



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