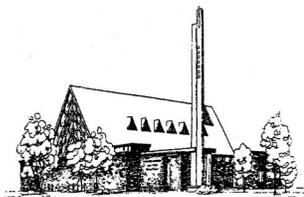


SPROUTS

Clergy

Rev Cheryl-Lynn
MacPherson



Advent 2016

As we enter this season of Advent and Christmas in ministry together, I am mindful of the gifts we have exchanged with one another throughout the past year: gifts of time and energy, compassion, care and challenge, of inspiring one another to be who God has called us to be.

We sometimes say gift-giving at this time of year is inspired by the Magi or the Wise Ones:

“On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” (Mt. 2:11)

But we know the Magi didn't go shopping at Canadian Tire or Walmart or Holt Renfrew, let alone online. The gift-giving of this season may have been inspired by the example of the Wise Ones, but it can become a burden, an obligatory exercise, or a source of shame if we don't have the money to participate in this yearly exchange in the same way as our neighbours, friends, and family. The Magi didn't go shopping for Jesus, they gave of what they had and they offered their time, attention and adoration.

As shopping season ramps up, I invite you to think about what would happen if this year we didn't participate in the frenetic shopping exercise? What if we instead affirmed and lifted up others by giving our time and attention and love to them? Could even a small percentage of our spending be directed toward a cause that is actually working to change systemic poverty and injustice?

In the Advent and Christmas seasons we celebrate the gift of the Divine with us in human form and this gives us the opportunity to ask ourselves what that means to us. Surely it means more to us than a trip to amazon.ca or a day at the mall.

May the hope, peace, joy and love of this sacred season be with you.

- Rev. Cheryl-Lynn MacPherson

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*✠ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his
mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. ✠*

From the Archives:

Rhoda's Piano

Many of you know that CAUC's organ came from a hotel in Halifax. As the church wasn't built to accommodate a pipe organ, many adjustments were required, but success ensued, and we have enjoyed the music ever since.

Our Yamaha grand piano has a much different and more poignant story. Rhoda Hopper-Torrens was a gifted music student whose piano was her treasure. As she approached graduation she was diagnosed with an aggressive cancer. Wedding plans were speeded up, but sadly, Rhoda died not long after. Her mother, Elizabeth Hopper-Voshol, donated Rhoda's piano to the church in 1987.

[Music at Cummer Avenue](#)

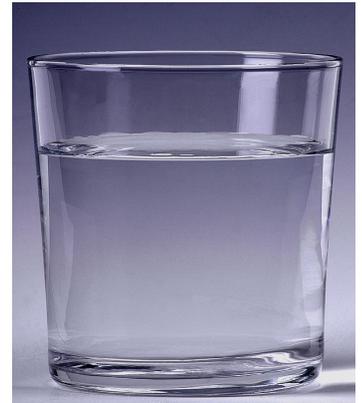
continues to be blessed by this generous gift.



Green Notes

Water - Commodity or Sacred Rite?

This year in the news were a number of accounts regarding bidding for water rights between a bottling company and a town wishing to secure rights for its citizens. The company had more money to spend than the town. Is this just? Should a commercial venture take precedence over Ontario residents? Watch for further developments.



[FYI Nestle pays \$3.41 per million litres to extract water for bottling.]

Support Chippewa of the Thames First Nation or, Line 9 just won't go away!

Despite the discussions on reversing Line 9, [beneath the hydro corridor just south of CAUC], concerns that a leak could damage our three major rivers, The Humber, Don and Rouge, the NEB National Energy Board, gave permission for the project to go ahead.

Now, the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation [COTTFN] has legally challenged that decision to the Supreme Court of Canada on the basis that the Canadian Government breached their duty to Indigenous Nations. The first hearing resulted in a decision against COTTFN. There was, however, a strong dissenting opinion, and COTTFN applied to the Supreme Court and was granted "leave to appeal". Watch for the ruling November 30, 2016.

You can help COTTFN by [donating](#). Chippewas of the First Nation has charitable status.

In the Christmas Spirit

An Evening of Seasonal Stories and Songs

Saturday, December 3, 2016 at 7 p.m.
(doors open at 6:15 p.m.)

Cummer Avenue United Church
53 Cummer Avenue (at Yonge Street)

Bring your family and friends to an exciting evening of readings,
adult & children's choir performances, instrumental music
and carol singing.

Featuring

Paul Bliss - CTV News
Pauline Chan - CTV News
Michelle Dubé - CTV News
Mike Wise - CBC News

& the music of

The Toronto French Montessori School Choir
Cummer Avenue United Church Chancel Choir
Seneca Hill Public School
Taiwanese United Church in Toronto Choir
VIP (Vision Impaired People) Choir
& The East York Concert Band

telling traditional and contemporary stories:

Rosie the Ruby Fairy and the Christmas Mail Mix-Up; The Last Straw;
Johann's Gift to Christmas; Dave Cooks the Turkey

A wonderful way to get into the Christmas spirit. Proceeds support
the Cummer Avenue Drop-Inn Program for the homeless and hungry.
Contributions on show night will be much appreciated.

Tickets: Adults \$10; Children 12 & under \$5.00
Call (416) 222-5417 for ticket information

***Meet the performers at a
reception after the show***

Browsing

Jane Urquhart's book "A Number of Things" has been published just in time for Christmas and before a year-long celebration of Canada's 150th birthday. "Stories of Canada told through fifty objects" are each about four pages, including a one-page illustration by Canadian Scott McKowen.

This book is different from one she might have written for Canada's Centenary in 1967. The cod fishery is gone, John Franklin's ship has been found in the Arctic, the Supreme Court decided in April 2016 that Métis are "Indians" under the Constitution Act of 1867 – Louis Riel would be elated!

A change from a potential earlier book may be more references to indigenous people scattered throughout, also the Beotuck legging, the Cree basket, the burnt mask, the Innu tea doll which was new to me. I didn't know Stratford had a WWI memorial designed by Walter Allward before he received commission for the Canadian Memorial at Vimy. Nor did I know that Lester Pearson's Nobel Peace Prize medal displays three nude figures!

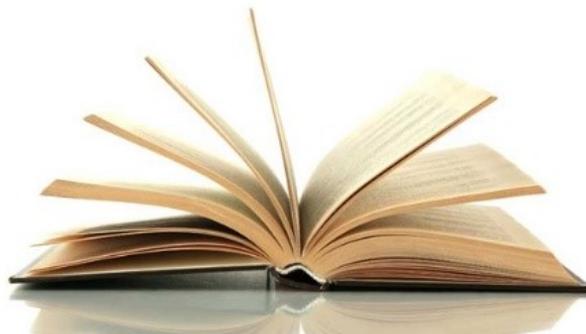
It was delightful to read about the single shoe found in the attic of Emily Carr's "House of All Sorts" and Alice Munro's sampler made by her great great grandmother in 1858.

Some things Urquhart found in museums: Brock's hat that arrived after he was killed, the rope that may have hung Riel. Some were from her personal experience: her uncle's barn and tractor, the bush plane, the canoe, her writing table. I began to think what my 50 objects might be.

Canada is usually near the top of any list of "world's best places to live." As R.L. Stevenson wrote:

The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

- Barbara McNutt



Chew on This Campaign calls for a national poverty reduction plan

Thank you to Cummer Avenue United Church for making “Chew on This” Sunday, October 18, such a great success! The Social Justice Committee gave out 100 packages containing an apple, a magnet, and a postcard which is to be mailed to the government advocating for a national poverty reduction program. We appreciate the participation of the congregation who mailed the postcard and spread the word about poverty in Canada.

Special congratulations goes out this year to our team that organized our *Canada Without Poverty* campaign in the Church. Special thanks to Andrea Journaux, Doreen Porter, James Acheson, Janet Love, Jean Birch, Joan Shields, Liz Gray, to Reet Kruus for preparation and distribution of the packages. We would like to express our appreciation also to Jaan Kruus, for his excellent photography.

“Chew on This” is an initiative by *Dignity For All*, a team composed of members of *Canada Without Poverty* and *Citizens for Public Justice* who coordinate groups across the country. This year 64 groups participated, from every province and territory, calling on Minister Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development) to include those with lived experience of poverty in meaningful consultations in the development of a comprehensive, rights-based Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy. Check out the photos on the *Canada Without*

Poverty and *Citizens for Public Justice* twitter feeds and Facebook pages! Also, check out our own team on Cummer Avenue United Church website, and CaucJustice facebook.

CAUC Social Justice Committee and many groups across Canada will continue working on activities towards a national poverty reduction plan. *Dignity for All* has suggested the following activities: “Submit a written brief to the HUMA committee [Poverty Reduction Strategies](#) study taking place right now; prepare to contribute to the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy [consultation process](#) that will begin in 2017; and ask your MP if s/he will vote in favour of send-ing private members bill, [Bill C-245](#), Poverty Re-duction Act, to Committee for further discus-sion and debate (second reading of this Bill started on Monday, October 31). If you and your group supports this bill, why not let the sponsoring MP, [Brigitte Sansoucy](#), know?”

If you would like to help, drop in to one of our meetings, usually held on the 3d Sunday of the month. Also do write your MP or encourage other groups to support Bill C-245. It’s not too late to mail out your “Chew on This” postcard!

Thank you for helping our efforts to eliminate poverty in Canada.

Joan Shields, Communications
Social Justice Committee



A Pastoral Letter to a United Church in a Divided Country

"United in Spirit, and inspired by God's grace, we love all, welcome all, and seek justice for all."

Just three weeks ago, the United Church of Christ Board affirmed this as the Mission of the United Church of Christ.

This morning, we wake up to a new reality. Our country and its citizens once again successfully elected a new leader. As we gather to worship this weekend, we will find among us many who are celebrating the decision that was reached – and many who are mourning it. We are, by all measures, a deeply divided people.

Because this election sharply separated us over matters of race, gender, human sexuality, faith, economic inequality and political persuasions we all bear a heavy burden moving forward. It is our call, our shared mission, to heed the call of God's Spirit and to work to repair damages in our deeply wounded and fiercely broken body.

Mr. Trump was able to win this election in spite of clear evidence from him of racism, homophobia, xenophobia, misogyny, and Islamophobia. This was so blatant that many of his own party's leaders could not endorse him. Many who voted for him knew this, and yet their fears about what is happening in their lives overrode their distaste for his bombast. In their search for a leader not connected to the power base of a government that has been perceived as corrupt, inefficient, and out of touch - his populist rhetoric appealed to them. He must now lead a country where people of color, women, Muslims, immigrants, the disabled, and an LGBT community all feel the sting and impact of his public speech.

To read the full United Church of Christ statement, go [here](#).

BECOMING AN AFFIRMING CHURCH



A few weeks ago in church we were asked to think of a time in our life, like starting a new job or a new school, when we were unsure of how we would be accepted, and then to consider what it must be like to frequently encounter that as a member of the LGBTQ community. In the case of looking for a place to worship, a church with a symbol identifying it as an affirming church, would give assurances that he or she would be welcomed and accepted.

CAUC is about to start on a journey to become such an identified place. We have an Affirming Process Team (APT) in place now, that will help us all explore the issues, concerns and questions that any of us might have, and we are planning the process we will all go through to commit to becoming an Affirming Ministry. The members of this committee are Irene Carriere, Karen Carlson, Maureen Williams, Angela Carley, Andrea Journeaux, Reet Kruus, Janet Love, Cheryl-Lynn Macpherson, Barb Puckering, John Carriere and Ruth Bramham.

We are just beginning this journey, and so we are all learning, but we welcome questions and concerns brought forward to any of us, and we will work together to address these. Watch for upcoming steps from APT.

Where Did 2016 Go?

At this year's cheese sale table I had to ask if UCW was having two sales this year. It's hard to believe it's Advent season and year end!

As we reflect on the past year, it is a great opportunity to consider how we experienced and expressed our spiritual gifts, our accomplishments, how we grew from our disappointments, and the many milestones.



It has been an active year, including study groups, Remits, workshops, renovation planning and yard sale to name a few. Year end is also a great time to prepare and submit annual reports and planning for 2017!

Many thanks for all the work in 2016.

Merry Christmas and many blessings,
Angela Carley

[Just a reminder; **Annual Meeting is February 12, 2017** after morning worship]

Advent/Christmas Services

November 27: Advent 1, God's Path of Peace
Communion

December 4: Advent 2, Growing Together

December 11: Advent 3, Carols and Lessons

December 18: Advent 4, Faithful Response

December 24: Christmas Eve – note one service only
7:00 pm gathering music and singing, 7:30 p.m. service,
joint with Taiwanese United Church, with Communion

December 25: Christmas Day, Joy to the World - Communion



Cummer Avenue United Church
53 Cummer Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M2M 2E5
phone: 416-222-5417
www.cummeravenueuc.ca

Lent/Easter
Newsletter Deadline:
Sunday, February 26, 2017

Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Milestones

Baptism:

Benjamin Robert Brown-Ionson on
September 25, 2016

