



The Newsletter of St. Mark's United Church, 115 Orton Park Rd, Toronto M1G 3G9 • (416) 439-8623 www.st-marks.ca

JUNE 2016

SUMMER EDITION

FROM THE MINISTER'S DESK

By: Greg Daly, Minister

The fans are whirling in the sanctuary, we seem to be already moving on from spring as I sit down to share with you a few thoughts to carry us into summer. When this opportunity first arose I thought: three months, that is a lot of service preparation and sermon writing. Now as we move into June, I cannot believe how quickly the time has whirled by.

From the first spark of our meeting, I have felt the warmth of sharing

time and energy with all of you. Our experience together has brought challenges, revelations, and great fulfillment. I am humbled by the commitment to service revealed in both the everyday and the extraordinary activities of the people in this congregation.

In early conversations about what our relationship might look like, I was advised that, "We at St. Mark's expect to take risks." This has been a watchword for me and I am grateful

for the opportunity to try new and different ways of being with each other as we worship together and as we consider what it means to be people of faith in Scarborough in 2016. Your flame is evident both inside and outside these walls. Thank you for the trust, and for the openness to explore our faith together in this welcoming space. Joseph and I are honoured to have been part of this place and thankful that we have been able to Grow a New Relationship with you both individually and collectively.

FROM THE PAST BOARD CHAIR

By: Rob Peck

For the past two years I have reflected on my faith in the Memo. What follows is my summary of some of those articles.

SEPTEMBER 2014: As a boy I had questions. What is God? What are we here for? Who cares? Is this all there is? What do I believe? As an adult I have concluded God is our highest, best thought, we are here to love each other wastefully without counting the cost, never forgetting that before we can love others we must first love ourselves. In this we follow the example of Jesus.

JANUARY 2015: Mother Teresa's prayer, abbreviated: People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered. Forgive them anyway. What you spend years creating, others could

destroy overnight. Create anyway. If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous. Be happy anyway. Give the best you have, and it will never be enough. Give your best anyway. In the final analysis, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.

MARCH 2015: Dow Marmur, Rabbi Emeritus at Holy Blossom Temple: "Dr. Atul Gawande, the author of *Being Mortal*, observes 'The only way death is not meaningless is to see yourself as part of something greater.' That's what religion does for many of us. Worship and observance of rituals aren't acts of desperation and evidence of fear of death, but intimations of transcendence, of having a sense of the rhythm of God's creation and our place in it."

JUNE 2015: Over the years we have lost people who were instrumental in ensuring that St. Mark's United Church was present to serve God by serving us, the community around us and the world at large. We can never repay them because they are no longer with us. But we can pay it forward. We can dedicate ourselves to ensuring that St. Mark's will continue to be a progressive, inclusive and life affirming presence in Scarborough for the next generation and the one after that.

SEPTEMBER 2015: The "pre-Easter" Jesus, the theologian Marcus Borg said, was a Jewish peasant who lived 2000 years ago whose message was about the nature of God: God loves you; love your enemies: be compassionate as God is

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...CONTINUED FROM THE PAST BOARD CHAIR

compassionate; God's realm is open to all, no exclusions! Religious life is about a deepening relationship with God, not about a life of requirements and reward. The "Post-Easter" Jesus is the Spirit that energized Jesus' followers after his death; persuaded them that he was still alive and with them; and led many to conclude that he was God.

CONCLUSION: The people of St. Mark's have, for many years, striven to do whatever we can, wherever we are, whenever we can, for as long as we can, with whatever we have, to follow Jesus and to try to make a difference in people's lives. St. Mark's cares. God cares. God bless us, every one, as we strive to serve God in the 21st century!

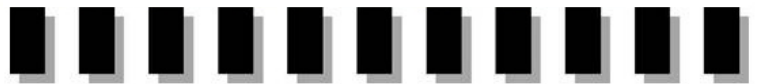
Amen

PROGRESSIVE DINNER

By: Luella Stephens

On Saturday, April 23rd, 52 enthusiastic hungry people gathered at the church for appetizers. After an hour of nibbling and visiting, off we all went to dine at one of 7 host homes for main course. At 9 pm we reconvened at the church to enjoy a wonderful variety of delectable desserts. We made new friends, had great fun and raised \$675. for St. Mark's.

Special THANKS to our main course hosts: Karen & Bart Boniface, Suzanne & Harry Brown, Rob Burrige, Carolyn & Art Nicholson, Marna & Ken Niece, Teresa & Larry Smith and Heather & Terry Urbansky. Also THANK YOU to Carolyn Mykusz and the Pathfinders who assisted with setting up the appetizers and punch, cleaned up from the appetizer course and set out the desserts. The event was organized by Heather Urbansky and Luella Stephens (with much help from our husbands). Circle Saturday, April 29th, 2017 on your calendar – the date for the next Progressive Dinner has already been set.



THE HELEN JONES' LIBRARY

By: Karen Wigle

Are you leading a summer service and looking for helpful material? There is a display set up on the library shelves with books to guide you. Take a look in the Worship and Program Resources section for more books.

NEW NON-FICTION BOOKS

From Mary Ethel Morton's library we have *Prayers for a Privileged People* by Walter Bruggemann.

Spend a few minutes looking at this book and I will be very surprised if you do not want to take it home for further reading. From Section 4: "We need to be reminded of the ones who lack voice or whose voice we do not often hear. We think

them unlike us, but they are our neighbors-the widows, the orphans, the immigrants, the poor, the laborers, the prisoners, the slaves, the addicts. They are the ones who dwell in places short of mercy, absent of justice, defaulted on the gifts of life. They are noticed acutely by God. Are they noticed by us?"

Perennials For Every Purpose – Choose the Right Plants for Your Conditions, Your Garden, and Your Taste by the well-known Canadian gardener Larry Hodgson.

Landscape Planning Practical Techniques for the Home Gardener by Toronto author Judith Adam.

NEW FICTION

The High Mountains of Portugal by **Yann Martel**, author of *Life of Pi* – his new bestseller

The Hundred-Foot Journey by **Richard Morais** – made into a movie in 2014 starring Helen Mirrin

All The Light We Cannot See by **Anthony Doerr** - another recent bestseller



ST. MARK'S BOOK STUDY, 2016 IS A WRAP!

By: Shirley Criscione

On May 6th, 2016 St. Mark's book study group celebrated another wonderful session end by feasting at a pot luck supper hosted by Luella and Tom Stephens. Thank you from everyone in the group to Tom and Luella, the consummate hosts. After an amazing meal, much laughter, scintillating conversation and sheer joy shared in a beautiful home, we proceeded with the book selection process for next year's study. Many people presented very thought provoking suggestions. We chatted, we debated, we voted and decided on Viktor Frankl's book *Man's Search for Meaning*. Please feel free to join the group next year and expect conversation, thoughtful sharing, caring connections and of

course - food. Speak with anyone in the group, but if you would like a book, speak with Rob Peck (our leader). His first shipment is already in. His cost is \$7.40; alternatively, you can purchase a copy from any good book store.

A big thank you to Rob for continuing to lead the book study.

Here is the list of books that we were considering for next year's study in case you're interested in expanding your reading of current texts about your faith journey.

Bass, Diana Butler; *Grounded: Finding God in the World - A Spiritual Revolution*

Borg, Marcus J.; *Convictions: How I Learned What Matters Most*

Germer, Christopher; *The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion: Freeing Yourself from Destructive Thoughts and Emotions*

Guiliano, David; *Postcards from the*

Valley: Encounters with Faith, Fear and God

Harrison, Gordon; *Allah, Jesus and Yahweh: The Gods that Failed*

Joblin, Kingsley; *Sacred Books of the World and Their Message for our Time*

Kushner, Harold S.; *Nine Essential Things I've Learned About Life*

Moore, Thomas; *Care of the Soul*

Moore, Thomas; *A Religion of One's Own: A Guide to Creating a Personal Spirituality in a Secular World*

Ortberg, John; *Who is This Man: The Unpredictable Impact of the Inescapable Jesus*

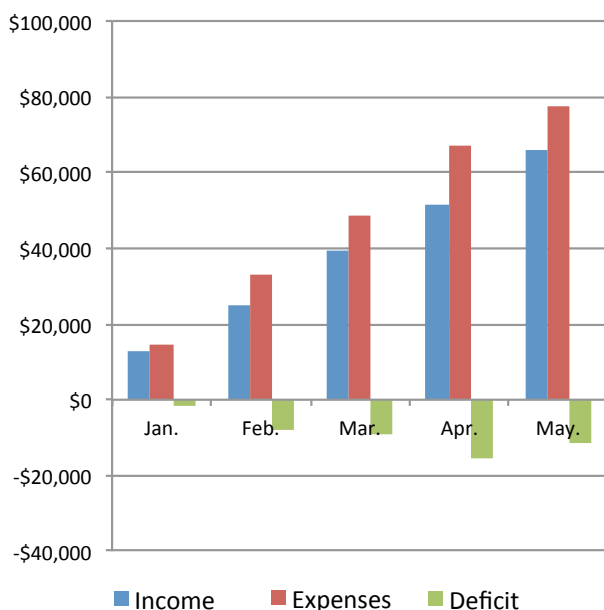
Sandel, Michael J.; *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?*

Spong, John Selby; *Biblical Literalism: A Gentile Heresy*

Wilson, Edward O.; *The Creation: An Appeal to Save Life on Earth*

THE FINANCIALS

Month	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.
Income	\$12,754	\$24,886	\$39,464	\$51,349	\$66,052
Expenses	\$14,504	\$32,728	\$48,529	\$66,963	\$77,590
Deficit	-\$1,750	-\$7,842	-\$9,065	-\$15,614	-\$11,538



On the left is a summary showing our latest financial position. We are still forecasting a budget deficit of approximately \$6,000 for 2016.

I would like to take this opportunity to update everyone the results of our 2016 Stewardship Campaign. Our Gifts Cards (gifts of our skills and time) lunch was very successful. We had fabulous participation and now have a great list of people to help us continue the stewardship work of our church. On the financial side of stewardship, we were unfortunately not as successful. You will remember our letter that came with your tax receipts asking for an increase per family of \$50 per year (or \$4.20/month) in order to eliminate our forecasted deficit. To date, we have only had less than 5 families respond to this request. I respectfully ask you to once again consider this request and the possibility of eliminating our deficit.

St. Marks is a great place. I'm proud to be a part of this family and the work we do as a whole for our local community. I thank you very much for both your financial and volunteer contributions.

Sincerely,

Steve Salt – Chair of Finance and Stewardship

Upcoming Events

Saturday, October 22nd. 2016

G.S.T. Goods, Services & Talent Auction

Coming,
Coming,
Soon



Start Planning!
Put the date in your diary and invite friends.
What goods, services or talent will you contribute?
Do you have contacts who can donate goods or a service?
More details early in September.
Any questions? Call Tom or Luella Stephens (416) 283-1267

ST MARK'S ANNUAL FALL TEE MONDAY SEPTEMBER 12

He said, "You are driving me nuts, dear." To which she replied, "It is not a drive, my dear husband; it is simply a long putt."

Ah yes, it is that time again, to begin thinking about our annual St Marks Fall Tee to be held this year, Monday, September 12th at Winchester Golf Club in Brooklin. We would love to have you join us for this important St. Marks' fund raising event. As well as participating in the event itself, we are looking for support the

day of the event, either at the course itself, or at the barbecue held at the church, following the golf.

Much of our financial success last year was based on the implementation of the idea of hole sponsorship. By way of explanation, each of the 18 holes is sponsored for \$100.00 and for that the sponsor will receive signage at the hole itself and recognition throughout the day. Last year, some of our sponsors were a dentist, a legal firm, a lawn and snow maintenance contractor, car dealerships, and individuals on behalf of a support group. As you can see, the sky is the limit. Approach

your business associates, your home service providers and your friends. All sponsorships come with a tax receipt, making them even more appealing. For more information regarding our Fall tee please contact Gayle Feeney, Steve Salt or Larry Smith. We look forward to hearing from you.

FORE!!



detach and forward, with payment, prior to August 1st, 2016 to:

St. Mark's United Church

c/o Gayle Feeney 115 Orton Park Road Toronto, ON

Fall Tee Golf Tournament

M1G 3G9

Golfer's name	Telephone	Email	Fee(\$85) enclosed



ROB AND JULIA PECK INVITE YOU,
together with your family and any visiting out-of-town guests, to our

17TH ANNUAL CANADA DAY CELEBRATION



Since 1999, we have hosted an open house for our family and friends on Canada Day, July 1st. We would love to share our share with our joy at being citizens/residents of this great country of Canada with you.

DETAILS REMAIN THE SAME AS LAST YEAR

TIME OF DAY: 3 pm until the last person leaves.

LOCATION: 43 D'Arcy Magee Crescent, Toronto

RULES: Potluck ... you provide one of an appetizer, salad or dessert and your beverage of choice; Julia and Rob will provide burgers, sausages, chicken and buns. Don't tell us what you are bringing ... we love surprises!

HOPE TO SEE YOU ON FRIDAY, JULY 1ST, 2016!

RSVP: to Julia & Rob Peck (so we have some idea how much meat and buns to buy!)
(416) 284-3975 (Home) (416) 569-3646 (Cell) robpeck40@gmail.com

DIRECTIONS TO THE PECKS' HOUSE AT 43 D'ARCY MAGEE CRES, SCARB.
VIA THE 401 FROM THE WEST:

Take the 401 east to the Port Union exit. Turn left (east) on Kingston Road to Port Union Rd. Turn right (south) on Port Union Rd. Go south to Conference Blvd. Turn right (west) on Conference Blvd. Turn right (north) on D'Arcy Magee. #43 is about 15 houses in on your left.

VIA THE 401 FROM THE EAST:

Take the 401 west to the Port Union/Sheppard exit. Turn left (west) on Kingston Road to Port Union Rd. Turn left (south) on Port Union Rd. Go south to Conference Blvd. Turn right (west) on Conference Blvd. Turn right (north) on D'Arcy Magee. #43 is about 15 houses in on your left