



The MEMO

Easter



The Newsletter of St. Mark's United Church, 115 Orton Park Rd, Toronto M1G3G9 (416) 439-8623 www.st-marks.ca March 2013

Circle of Friends Valentine's Party

St. Mark's has a group of our adults who are challenged attend a "Circle of Friends" meeting every Tuesday morning until mid afternoon. On Tuesday, February 12th, St. Mark's hosted a Valentine's Party for them.



Board Chair's Message

Well, spring is scheduled to arrive on Wednesday, and here on Monday, as I write, the weather is still giving us its icy blast. It has been quite a winter.

For those of you with children and grandchildren, I hope had a nice March Break. It was also the time of the Spring Daze Talent Show. It was a wonderful night to show off our talents, and if you came out, you were sure to have a good time. A special thanks to Don Thurston, Charlie Wardell, and all the performers and people who helped set up, take tickets, and provide refreshments. It was a great success.

It will be Palm Sunday when you might receive this Memo, and I always look forward to this jubilant service. After the service is the workshop and light lunch hosted by the Joint Needs Assessment Committee to discuss your thoughts on Christian Education. Even if you don't have children in Sunday School, Christian Ed also includes adult Christian Ed, such as the mid week services, special workshops and book study. We need your input on your thoughts for what is needed for programs and leadership as part of our work at St. Marks. I find expanding my spiritual growth has helped me cope with the many stresses of life.

During the Easter Week, there is the Maundy Service on Thursday, March 28, Good Friday, and then Easter Sunday. It is a week full of emotions, and something not to miss.

Spring is around the corner, the pussy willow tree along the church driveway has catkins, and the bulbs are starting to push through the soil. Have you seen and heard the male cardinals, in their lovely bright red plumage at the tops of the trees singing their hearts out? It is a lovely time for renewal.

As we move into April, please note Volunteer Appreciation Sunday is April 14, and the Membership Team looks forward to preparing the service and seeing you there. April is also Earth Month, so be kind to the earth, take some time to check into ways to be a steward of the earth, reduce your environmental footprint, it can be as simple as cleaning up the garbage that has collected over the winter on your street or in your local park, and taking part in a community planting event. You and the natural world will benefit from it.

Holy Week Events

- March 24 11am: Palm Sunday Service
- March 28 7pm: Maundy Thursday Communion Service
- March 29 11am: Good Friday Service
- March 31 11am: Easter Sunday Communion Service



April at a Glance!

- April 4 7pm: Board Meeting
- April 5 7pm: Book Study 7th Session
- April 7 11am: Sunday Service
- April 14 11am: Volunteer Appreciation Service**
- April 15 7pm: CE Team Meeting
- April 16 7:30pm: Property Team Meeting
- April 19 7pm: Book Study 8th Session
- April 21 11am: Earth Day Service**
- April 25 7pm: Worship Team Meeting
- April 28 11am: Sunday Service

Mondays @ 7pm: Art Classes

...and a peek into May!

- May 2 7pm: Outreach Meeting
- May 3 7pm Book Study Celebration
- May 12 11am: Mother's Day Service**

For the detailed SMUC Calendar of events www.st-marks.ca > [About Us](#) > [Calendar](#)



The United Church of Canada
L'Eglise Unie du Canada

St. Mark's is a progressive, inclusive, and life-affirming Christian community of faith within The United Church of Canada.

Worship services are held Sundays at 11 am. Come early for coffee and fellowship!



Through the days of the story...By Paul Hutchison, Minister

I found this graphic to include in the Memo this month as an example of all the days of the story through holy week. Lent is a long period of time. It is the 40 days before Easter (you don't count the Sundays). It begins on Ash Wednesday where the palms used to shout Hosanna on Palm Sunday the year before are burned and the imposition of ash is used to mark each of us as we begin the Lenten journey. Shrove Tuesday, the pancake supper event or Mardi Gras (fat Tuesday) was to clear the pantry of excess to enter a penitential season, a time of reflecting on our life of faith more intentionally. This year as the five weeks of Lent progressed we had a collection of candles up at the front of the church and reduced the number lit each week as we reflected on the journey through the story of the last days of life of the one called Jesus. Tenebrae is Latin for 'shadows' or 'darkness'.

But this week it goes that much faster. Palm Sunday begins this week. We will enter the sanctuary crying out hosanna and waving palm branches... cheering... hooray for Jesus... he's coming... he's going to make a difference... and we are with him... but... those voices are not drowned out by voices shouting back... they just peter out as they see what is coming... as he faces trial after trial... and even Peter, the one called Cephas, the Rock, denies that he is with him as the days pass and the story of a life draws to a close... That week, Jesus stops in Bethany, to be with Lazarus, Mary and Martha. They were his friends, his true friends. Jesus didn't name them as disciples, but they were the ones who cared for him, who provided a place to breathe... In the story, Mary anointed Jesus with a pound of Nard, worth a year's salary for a general labourer, and wiped his feet with her hair. That scent would have surrounded him for every moment of the days to come. That scent reminding him of the act of love of someone who truly cared for him. That scent, would have been on the cloth he wore, that single piece of cloth, the day's equivalent to an Armani suit, becoming that much more valuable with the added scent of the nard. Thursday... a night in the upper room with his friends where Jesus does the task that you couldn't even ask your slave to do... he washes their feet... a task so low, by law, you had to do it yourself... then he breaks bread with them and shares in a common meal, and makes it into something more.

Another day passes. They end up taken the garden where Jesus had gone to pray. He is taken to trial, and condemned to crucifixion, and placed on that cross, he died. Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani. My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? It sounds like a cry of abandonment, but Jesus isn't crying out in defeat, he is singing from the hymn book, he is singing Psalm 22... a song of hope... verse 24 says "When I cried out, he listened and didn't turn away..." Vs. 26 says "The poor will eat and be full, and all who worship you will be thankful and live in hope..." the hymn concludes, "In the future everyone will worship and learn about you, Or Lord. People not yet born will be told, that God has saved us!" That is neither a song of defeat nor of anguish. It's like Amazing Grace, a favourite to many, do the words pull you down into gloom, or does the song lift you up into hope? Jesus is singing a song that lifts him up into hope! Even at his end, he knows what is to come...

The story says he died, and is sealed into a tomb, the end... but of course... instead... the beginning. Three days and Mary comes to the tomb and it is open... she goes in and the body is gone... she sees the gardener and asks where he has taken him... He speaks to her... Mary... and she replies Rabboni... Teacher... and she knows it is him, and he is not gone...

We have heard the story so many times... every year... every communion... every funeral... and yet we find something more in it each time. It's not just the words, it's the song within us that raises us up... We have all lived each of those different days... days when we are blessed with the love of another, days when our love of another blesses them, days when we cry and pray in the garden, days when we feel alone, days when we share a meal with those we love that strengthens us, days when we feel the world votes against us, days when we experience death, days when we find new life in the midst of that death... It's not just an ancient story... it's alive... it's part of us, part of who we are... and... as we share in that story again, we remind ourselves on this journey... We too are not alone. Thanks be to God!

Paul

Volunteer Appreciation Sunday - April 14th

Our 2nd annual volunteer appreciation Sunday will be held on April 14th...everyone is important at St. Mark's...Please plan to attend!!

Y & CE

Youth & Christian Education News

Water 4 Life by Susan Holden

After going on a Me to We trip to Kenya in 2011, my daughter, Lexi, developed an action plan to help raise awareness in Canada about international water and sanitation issues. She is also trying to raise \$5,000 for a clean water project in Kenya. Lexi's vision became a large event called Water 4 Life, which took place on March 15, at the University of Waterloo. Lexi really wanted to give others the chance to go through the life-changing experience that she went through in Kenya when she did the water walk with the Kenyan Mamas. So Lexi created a relay race where the participants carry large containers (filled with 15 L of water) on their backs secured by a rope around their heads. Each team of 5-6 students had to complete 4 km, every member taking turns carrying the water container. All 12 teams completed the 4 km and everyone, including many spectators and supporters, had a great time! Overall, Water 4 Life was a success! Lexi and her group of dedicated volunteers were able to increase awareness about clean water and sanitation issues which was their primary goal. They also raised over \$1,100 towards a clean water project in Kenya.

Lexi wishes to thank everyone at St. Mark's for all their support and contributions. If anyone would still like to make a donation towards this very worthwhile cause, please email me at sueholden@sympatico.ca or see me any Sunday at church.

(Lexi was a very active member of the Sr. Youth Group until she left for university in Fall '11. Ed.)

A Note about Jeffrey...

Jeffrey Dale, our Minister for Youth and Christian Education, is on medical leave.

Jeffrey has made arrangements to ensure coverage of Sunday School and CE has made alternate arrangements for Bible Study and other adult education programs.

Jeffrey knows that your thoughts and good wishes will be with him.

Please hold Jeffrey in your thoughts and prayers as he faces these health challenges.

Spiritual Growth

April 30th



Please join the Christian Education team for another evening of Spiritual Growth on Tuesday April 30th from 7 pm until 8:30 pm. This will be an introduction to Therapeutic Yoga.

Therapeutic Yoga breaks down yoga poses to their essential components so that you can find your pure range of motion. It gives you an opportunity "to be an adventurer, exploring your own body." You do not have to have any previous yoga experience to benefit from a class like this. The evening will be led by Anne Pruner from *In the Spirit Yoga Studio in Highland Creek* who brings a blend of compassion, humour and respect to her teaching. She is currently a student of the internationally renowned Susie Hatley of Functional Synergy where she is focusing on therapeutic yoga. The key to this kind of yoga is to move purely and mindfully so we can get out of pain, improve movement and live a full life! Anne is now, more than ever, committed to helping her students find peace in body, mind and spirit. Please wear comfortable clothing and bring a yoga mat/ towel and 2 blankets/towels and any yoga props you like to use. Space is limited so watch for the sign-up sheet or contact Leslie at wrightj@sympatico.ca.

Upcoming Youth Event

Senior Youth – April Youth Event Presbytery Wide with a focus on LGBT and Allies



St. Mark's United Church: We are called to be a progressive, inclusive life-affirming Christian community of faith within The United Church of Canada.

An "Affirming Congregation" is one that has intentionally reflected upon what it means to be inclusive and that has evaluated its openness to the ongoing work of being intentional about how it welcomes and includes others within the life and work of the church. All barriers to those wishing to be a part of the congregation are explored, particularly, though not only, those around issues of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Financially Speaking – St. Mark's February 28, 2013 Financial Summary

The statement at right shows our financial position to the end of February 2013. You will see that two months into the year, the deficit is at \$10,996, which is higher than we would expect at this time, based on the budget. However, offerings are at 14% of the budget, which is close to the 17% we would expect. There are a couple of lines with expenses running above 17% and none of the fund-raising projects have happened yet.

<i>Income</i>	<i>February '13</i>	<i>Budget '13</i>	<i>% of budget</i>
Fund-Raising Projects	-\$503	\$13,200	-3.8%
Membership and Pastoral Care	\$0	\$500	0.0%
Offerings	\$23,780	\$169,500	14.0%
Property	\$1,265	\$8,000	15.8%
Social	\$560	\$1,750	32.0%
Worship Related	\$0	\$500	0.0%
Total Income	\$25,102	\$193,450	13.0%
Expenses			
Administration	\$1,078	\$9,000	12.0%
Christian Education	\$812	\$3,500	23.2%
Communication	\$55	\$1,000	5.5%
Membership and Pastoral Care	\$1,191	\$5,564	21.4%
Personnel	\$24,761	\$153,457	16.1%
Property Expense	\$6,069	\$38,600	15.7%
Social	\$0	\$1,450	0.0%
Worship	\$2,132	\$14,698	14.5%
Total Expenses	\$36,098	\$227,269	15.9%
Net Income	-\$10,996	-\$33,819	

Seed (Fundraising) Projects

We would like people to consider taking on individual GST-type events/projects that would be considered "Seed Projects" to assist with our fundraising. If you have any ideas and want to communicate them to the congregation, please do so through the Memo or weekly SM news.

Art Show/Sale May 10th & 11th

—Melinda Calway

I've been hosting an art show of my work every second year at St Mark's for the last several years. It is a seed project as 20% of proceeds from paintings sold goes back to the wonderful work of St Mark's. One of the great things about holding my show at our church is I get so many offers to help out...it's wonderful...I sure couldn't pull this off without my St Mark's family!

I've been very busy creating new paintings over the last couple years and will be exhibiting them for sale for the first time on May 10th & 11th. My website has just been updated with new paintings so check it out. www.timelessgraphics.ca

The details of the show/sale will follow in the next Memo but in the meantime please put the dates in your calendar.



Watercolour Classes @ St. Mark's

—Melinda Calway



After teaching art classes at our church for the past 7 years; I've seen many want-to-be artists blossom into confident outstanding artists. If you think you have no talent but it's something you always kinda wanted to try...come out and try...what do you have to

lose? What do you have to gain? Well how about a hobby/skill you can do into your 90's that brings you satisfaction and a wonderful feeling of accomplishment & pleasure. The only thing that feels better than buying a painting you love to look at every day is creating a painting that you love to look at daily!

A session of 5 weeks is only \$95 including HST.

5 weeks is generally enough time for you to know that you want to continue. A Great gift for the spouse or friend that keeps saying they want to join.

Please call the office for further details.



St. Mark's
United Church

Amazing! Lawn Sale

Sat. June 1st

9 am – 1 pm

115 Orton Park Rd.
Free Parking



PROPERTY REPORT...

At our recent Property meeting, we discussed the concept of holding a Walkathon in late September/early October. The objective would be to raise funds to support the Outreach Team with their Christmas Hampers programme this year. More details on this will follow in the next few weeks. To be successful, it will be important that there be a minimum of 30 participants for this event.

The bench in the patio area was destroyed last year; to replace it with a more durable model, we are wondering if any member would like to contribute to a **Memorial Bench** on behalf of a beloved friend or family member. A plaque commemorating this gift would be affixed to the bench. If you have an interest in this project, please contact Gord Maunder or Ruth Joyce, co-chairs of the Property team.

A contract has been signed to cover the annual lawn maintenance required for 2013. Over the next month or so, a number of Spring projects will be undertaken, including repainting the rails along our parking lot entrance, re-painting the shed, as well as the upstairs washroom.

St. Mark's United Church

Fall Tee

Golf Tournament



Yes, it is that time of year

again when thoughts turn to golfing season ahead. Our planning team has met, and the date for this year's event will be **Monday, September 9th** at **Winchester Golf Club in Brooklin, ON**. Once more there will be a barbeque to follow at which everyone (golfer/non golfer) are cordially invited to share the hospitality of Bob and Gayle Feeney at their home. Tickets for Golf are \$80 (game fee, cart, barbeque). The barbeque only, will cost \$10. Please make plans to support your church in this event. More details can be received by contacting Gord Maunder, Larry Smith or Gayle Feeney.

Outreach Ministry Team

Rob Burrige, Chair

Outreach at St Marks historically, considers reaching out to help people in our local community a priority. This year, the Outreach Team introduced the East Scarborough Multicultural Choir and Gospel Group to St Marks. In an effort to build a relationship with these children and youth, the choir performed at Spring Daze. Those who were in attendance at the variety show experienced the energy and spirit of this group. We hope to see them in the near future providing fun and fellowship. These kids are serious and committed singers.

In addition, part of Outreach's objectives is education and awareness. Starting this past February, the Outreach Team launched a 3 night documentary screening event/discussion. The format of the first two evenings have 30 to 40 minutes to view the screening and then equal time in an intimate setting to discuss the short film. The film topics are on Social Justice/Action. The 3rd and last night is Friday, April 12th, 7pm to 8:30pm - *The Pipeline Dream* Watch for a few more small projects that you can be involved in with the Outreach Ministry Team prior to the summer months.

From the Membership Team...

Funeral Pre-Planning Session: Giffen-Mack will be holding a 50-minute pre-planning information session after the service on Sunday, May 5th...if you are interested please plan to attend.

St Mark's Eggs-travaganza... Rob Burridge

There was some egg-citing news that came to St Mark's in March. Rob Burridge from the Outreach Team spoke to his friends from the Egg Farmers Association of Ontario. They play Word Scramble each week! Sunny and Shelly, both agreed, that, St Mark's could launch an eggs-traordinary fundraiser.

So, Rob and the Outreach Team eggs-plored the idea of providing fresh eggs to the participants at the SCHC Food Bank. This would be done by collecting donations after the service each week until the congregation fulfilled this eggs-traordinary goal to purchase enough fresh eggs for 240 weekly food bank recipients. A half dozen for each household!! This was no yoke! The Outreach Team and the congregation got crackin. Boy, was St Marks egg-cited!!!

Sunny and Shelly also provided some "give a ways" to the Outreach Team as a thank you gesture. These would be shared to those who contributed to this fundraiser egg-sperience. As well, they provided some activities for the Sunday School children; fun and egg-ucated literature. This project was eggs-cellent fun and egg-ucational for all.

From the Communications Team...

SM NEWS: Many members of the congregation receive this weekly message by email from the Church. To ensure that those who don't have access to email are kept in the loop, The Communications Ministry Team has arranged for the SM NEWS to be posted on a bulletin board just outside the Sanctuary.

Celebrating special Occasions in the Memo: For privacy reasons, the editor needs to receive these in writing prior to publication. A small form was developed for purpose, however, Trevor has advised that submissions by email will also be accepted.

The Next Chapter...by Karen Wigle

Many thanks to Peggy Hall, Jeffrey Dale, and our minister Paul Hutchison for donating these books to our library:

Divine Hunger Canadians On Spiritual Walkabout by Peter Emberley

"Canadians from all across Canada are embarking on spiritual searches...they are not, however, returning to the churches, synagogues and temples, a signal that Canadians are distancing themselves from the authority of creed, dogmatic theology and clergy in favour of a personal-not institutional-God...."

Mending the World Spiritual Hope For Ourselves And Our Planet by Rev. Bruce Epperly and Rabbi Lewis Solomon

A Season In Bethlehem Unholy War In A Sacred Place by Joshua Hammer

Where The Pavement Ends Canada's Aboriginal Recovery Movement and the Urgent Need for Reconciliation by Marie Wadden

Native Chiefs And Famous Metis Leadership and Bravery In the Canadian West by Holly Quan

Child Honoring How To Turn This World Around edited by Raffi and Sharna Olfman

Revenge of the small Small by Jean Little

And for some good things to eat and drink while you read...

Have you been to the T & T grocery stores? They cater to the Asian market and have an interesting range of fresh produce, meat and seafood. There are many different packaged goods, spices and a selection of house wares. Try the Portuguese custard tarts from the bakery. There is a food circus at the store at 9255 Woodbine (and 16th Avenue) where you can buy takeout Chinese foods. There are times during the week when it isn't too busy and you can sit and read and relax with a cup of tea. There is also a store at 7070 Warden Avenue (north of Steeles) and one downtown at 222 Cherry St. The weekly flyers and more information are available at their website tnt-supermarket.com.

Mt. Kilimanjaro Fundraiser...Nicky Slovitt

Early on the morning of February 4th, 2013, my cousin Kim Wilkinson and I reached the highest point in Tanzania, Africa; Mount Kilimanjaro at 19,341 feet. Kilimanjaro is considered to be every person's Everest. In other words, with a reasonable level of fitness, most people are able to train for this hike of a lifetime. With that said, summit night, with minus 25 degree wind chill weather, a straight uphill climb that started at midnight and very thin mountain air, it was the hardest physical challenge of my life.

An additional challenge we took on included a fundraising component. The company we traveled with, Live Out Loud Adventures, asked us to give back to the people of Tanzania by raising \$5000 each for a home and school located at the base of the mountain called, Amani.

For over 10 years, Amani Children's Home has been dedicated to the protection of Tanzania's most vulnerable population: street children. Amani, which means "peace" in Swahili, was founded by Tanzanians, and over the course of the past decade has rescued hundreds of children from the perils of life on the streets, where they face numerous dangers including malnutrition and abuse. Amani provides healthy food, education, counseling and medical care for every street child who turns to them for help. When possible, children are reunified with (extended) families.

Together with our families, friends and business associates, Kim and I were able to raise over \$12,000 for Amani. Many of our friends from St. Mark's were part of the donors to this worthy cause and we thank you dearly for supporting the children.